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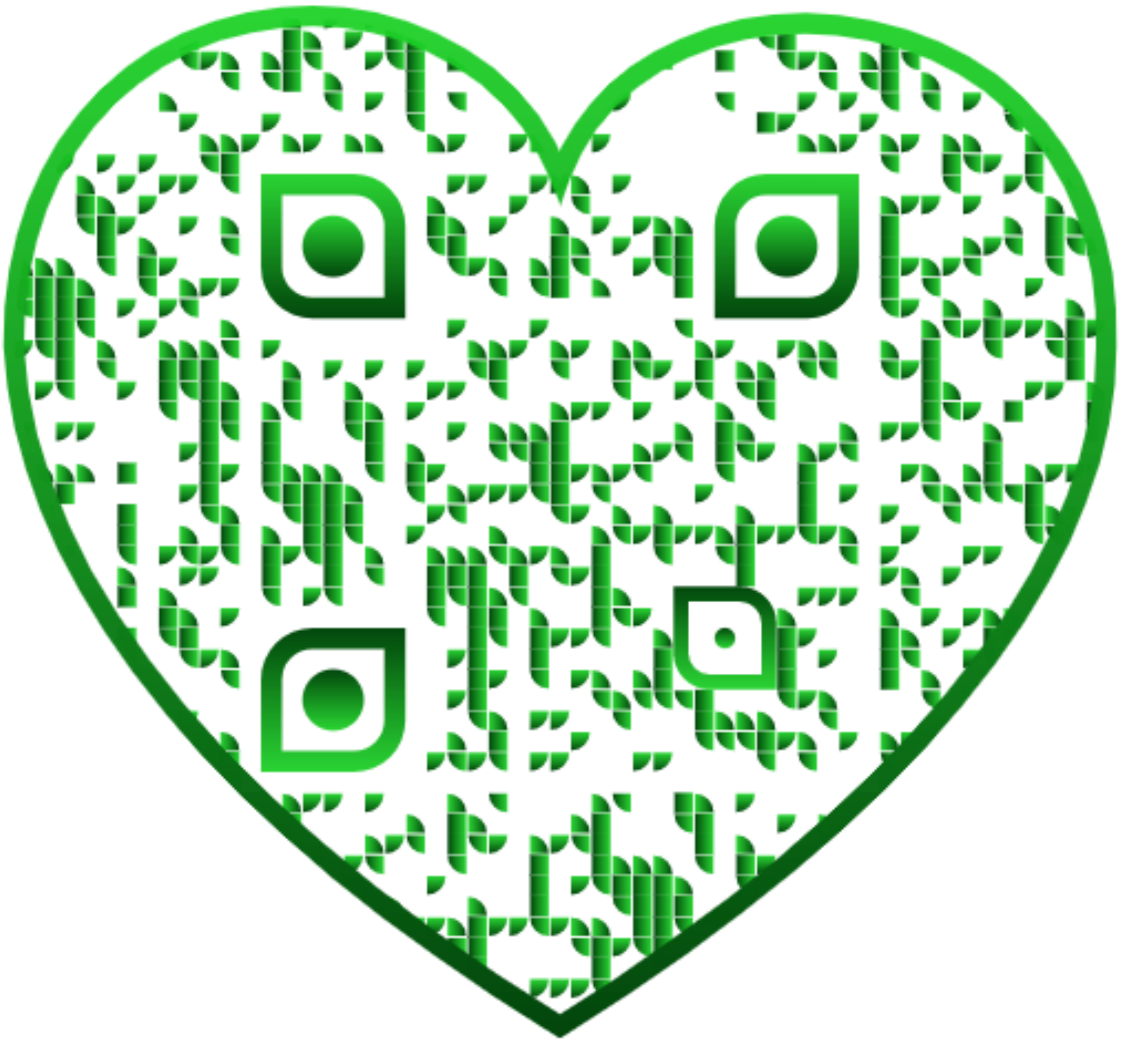
FREUDIAN FEUD BY GM RAYMOND KEENE OBE

BCM INTERVIEW:

A GIVER IN THE GAME OF TAKERS

DAVID LEADA

THE TALIBAN ASSAULT ON CHESS BY MILAN DINIC



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The Taliban assault on chess

The global chess community must stand with Afghanistan's players and not let them be silenced or forgotten.

Few were under any illusions about what Taliban rule would mean when they retook Afghanistan from the U.S. in late August 2021. But some hoped for moderation — that at least common-sense freedoms, like playing chess, might be preserved. However, like in 1996 when the took power for the first time, chess is again facing a ban in Afghanistan.

The BBC was the first to break the story on 11 May, that the Taliban authorities in Afghanistan have decided to "suspend chess" due to the fear the game can be a source of gambling. The decision was made in an edict from the all-powerful Amr bil Ma'ruf wa Nahi 'an al-Munkar (the Ministry for the Propagation of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice under the Taliban). As Atal Mashwani, a spokesman of the Taliban government's sports directorate, told AFP, "chess in Islamic sharia law is considered a means of gambling. There are religious considerations regarding the sport of chess. Until these considerations are addressed, the sport of chess is suspended in Afghanistan," he added. Of course, the Taliban did not put a timeline on the decision, which means the ban is - indefinite.

Until this editorial was prepared (26th May), there has been no further news from the self-imposed rulers of Afghanistan. What has emerged are stories by Afghan chess players living abroad, speaking of the problems their community is facing in Afghanistan. While in the West the story was mainly reported as a curiosity, the Indian media took an interest. One of their biggest national dailies, the Indian Express, published a lengthy article which also included accounts of Afghan chess players - inside and outside of the country - speaking of dire conditions for chess players. With no clear rules and an established legal system, the punishments are arbitrary and chess players are one of many victims. The fact is that chess has been on the run in Afghanistan since the U.S. forces left, in 2021. The leadership of the Afghan chess federation left the same year.

The global chess community was quick to react as was the International Chess Federation (FIDE) which published a statement saying it "deeply regrets" the decision and noting it is in contact with the IOC and other relevant international sports bodies, to help address the matter. BCM also understands that FIDE has formed a special team, led by the Deputy Chair of FIDE's Management Board, Dana Reizniece, to address the matter.

There are approximately 2,000 registered chess players across Afghanistan while the number of people who play chess is likely to be significantly higher, according to FIDE. In a poor country such as Afghanistan, chess is more than a pastime - it's a tool for education, growth, and international connection. It is, therefore, difficult to understand why anyone would want to ban the game. Not to mention the fact that chess is quite popular and supported in the Islamic world, with Afghanistan's neighbour, Uzbekistan - which shares the same culture and language - is hosting major global chess events.

The chess world must not let this case fade. Sustained pressure from FIDE, players, federations, and media will be crucial to ensure the Afghan chess community is not silenced. The future of chess in Afghanistan depends on the solidarity of the global chess family - in the true spirit of *Gens una sumus*.

Milan Dinic, Editor

Mamiya RZ67

BCM Interview:
David Llada on life behind the lens of chess

A GIVER IN THE GAME OF TAKERS

Best known as the game's foremost photographer, Llada reflects on his journey, the people he's met, and the future of chess

By Milan Dinic
Photo: Courtesy of David Llada

In conversation with BCM, Llada discusses his path into chess, the players he's encountered, the art of photography, and his views on the game's future.

Born in 1978 in the northern Spanish village of Pravia, Llada began his career as a journalist before turning to photography - eventually serving as Chief Marketing Officer at the International Chess Federation (FIDE). Today, he is embarking on a new project with the Internet Chess Club.

Llada is one of the first people I encountered in the chess world, after I began editing BCM in late 2016. BCM and our U.S. partners, the American Chess Magazine, were using his photos from chess tournaments. The first person to mention David to me was BCM Director, Stephen Lowe. "There are two types of people in the world, givers and takers", Stephen said. "David Llada is a giver - one of the good guys in chess."

When I relay this to Llada, he smiles: "That's probably the third time that I heard somebody saying that about me. But, to be honest, I got it back tenfold!"

"In the long run, I think it pays off to be generous and to help people," says David as we begin our Zoom call. I was in London; he joined from his home in San Sebastián, Spain.

A NEWSPAPER PHOTO IN THE BACK OF A CAR AS A GATEWAY TO CHESS

David Llada's path to the chess world is largely due to serendipity. As a five-year-old, he was sitting in the back of his father's car and picked up a newspaper where he saw a picture which would lead him straight into the world of chess.

"All kids, when they start reading, try and read everything they see - book covers, brochures, road signs. My first contact with chess was through a picture in the newspaper.

I saw these two men, looking very serious, playing a game. I saw their names in the picture, written in letters I didn't know. It was the second match between Kasparov and Karpov, the image included the nameplates, which was in Cyrillic."

Llada was very interested in the game but nobody in his surroundings knew it. One day, a teacher in school took out a few chess sets during class and taught the moves to the children. "I remember this as the best day of school. My first happy day in school".

Being fascinated by the game and not having anyone in his family play it, David would go on to teach chess to his parents, close friends, neighbours. And - as luck would have it - "the school also asked me to teach chess to classmates, and make money from it, earning my allowance as a young teenager!"

LLADA with JEROEN VAN DEN BERG, director of the famous Tata Steel Chess Tournament in Wijk aan Zee

FROM JOURNALISM TO PHOTOGRAPHY AND CHESS

Llada says he never had the chance to become a strong player - there was no club in his small hometown. So, when it came to making a living, Llada chose journalism. A beautiful career but not exactly offering the best life and work balance or financial rewards, as most people in the trade would tell you.

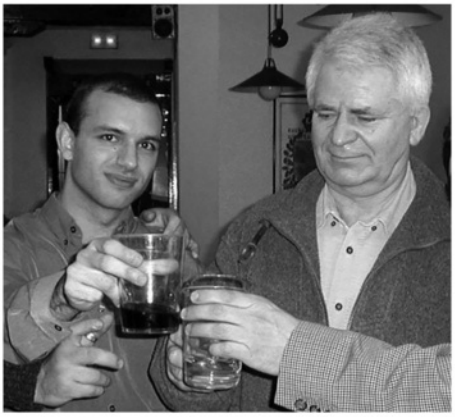
After the September 11 attacks, the Middle East was on edge. The U.S. was preparing for war, and Iraq had already been marked as a target - as we now know, based on fabricated intelligence. Llada flew to Iraq in 2002, to do a report on daily life in the country.

"I worked for a Mexican news agency and they also hired a photographer. We were supposed to go on 17 September 2001, just eight days after the attacks on New York and Washington, but we postponed it for a few months. The trip took place in 2002. We were there as it was obvious something was going to happen soon. Many of the buildings we took pictures of then would be destroyed the following year in the U.S. invasion," Llada explains.

"I realised back then that journalism is changing and that a journalist of the future will have to do everything on their own - including taking photos. So, I turned to learning photography, which helped me get more work."

Soon, taking photos became more attractive than writing. "When you're a journalist, you need to follow everything in detail. For example, in chess - you need to be on top of the results and what happened. As a photographer, you're much more flexible."

Llada started going to chess tournaments - "to see friends and have fun" and there he noticed one thing that stands out in the chess world when it comes to meeting people: "There's something very particular about chess tournaments - they last a week or 10 days. So, it's not like football when you have one game in one day and that's it. During a chess tournament, you spend more time together with people and get the opportunity to connect at a different level. And I enjoy that", Llada said.



With BORIS SPASSKY in Bilbao, early 2000s

TEQUILA SHOTS WITH A FORMER WORLD CHAMPION

Anyone who has spent some time around professional chess players will notice they are a little different than your regular folk. Not everyone is the same and there are some distinct types of personalities. To use the analogy from the start of the interview - splitting people on givers and takers, the world of professional chess seems to be more skewed towards the latter.

"Things that work out well for you in competitive chess - being paranoid, ruthless, determined that you are the best and the strongest - don't necessarily transfer well in real life situations," Llada says diplomatically.

David Llada splits the players across several groups: "You have sportsmen like Carlsen, who are extremely competitive. You got people who have a more artistic side, and then those who are more like scientists, deep down in their thoughts."

"When you become a top player, you need to give up many other things. Top players are not necessarily the most interesting people you will come across in chess," Llada notes. "They can tell you so many stories about chess, but usually the most interesting people are the ones who quit [professional chess - note, BCM] on time."

Llada lists one player who made it to the top and who was also "an amazing guy."

"Boris Spassky! I was very sad to hear about his passing recently. We met a few times. He was very down to earth, funny and good at telling stories," Llada notes.

The way he describes the late world champion is very similar to what other people have said about Spassky. Llada points out that, apart from being a good storyteller, "Spassky would also listen to you and ask you questions, something not many chess players at the top would ever do. He was not only telling you his story, but he wanted to know about other people."

Llada first met Spassky in Mexico in the early 2000s, when an interview for a TV programme didn't go quite as planned. "After two hours, we'd already cleared half a bottle of tequila and were deep in conversation. By the time he arrived, let's just say we were both enthusiastic. The interview never aired."

I ask Llada to find the recording and publish it if possible - it's chess history, after all! He promises to look into it (and we hope he does!).

ON THE ART OF TAKING A GOOD PHOTO

"I learnt photography by myself. From the technical standpoint, photography is not that difficult," Llada explains, noting that "everyone has to discover their own style and approach," adding that he tried to emulate the style of photographers he admired.

Llada is well-known for his portraits of players in the most intense moments of deep thought and drama. When it comes

PAMPLONA

BORIS GELFAND (left) and ABHIMANYU MISHRA

The great BORIS GELFAND, during a lecture in Singapore in 2024

SUSANNA GABOYAN, Sharjah 2017

to the art of taking a good photo, he says everyone has to discover their own style but advises one thing: limiting the number of takes.

"This will make you think twice before taking a photo. You will carefully consider if you should make a step forward or back, think about framing, the composition and everything else before making that decisive "click" on the camera shutter. It's like in chess: Carlsen was allowed to play online only four hours a week, and he used that time wisely. Real or self-imposed limitations will push you to make the most of every opportunity".

When asked about his contemporaries in chess photography, Llada points out Lennart Ootes, a Dutch photographer whose work also features in BCM. "Lennart is a super creative photographer who will see something in the background that many others won't notice."

Another name comes up - Maria Emelianova, also a well-known chess photographer. "She isn't so artistic as Lennart, but she is an amazing news photographer - always in the right place at the right time. Also, in her photos you can see a connection between her and the subject."

FIDE AND THE FUTURE OF CHESS

While photography was his passion, it wasn't the main source of income for Llada. Before joining FIDE full time in 2018, Llada worked for a private company invested in the betting business, where he followed other sports, including his second-favourite (after chess) - tennis. This experience also helped him with his role at FIDE where he headed the Marketing team as the Chief Marketing Officer.

This period, which happened as Arkady Dvorkovich took over the International Chess Federation, saw the organisation change significantly: making both the FIDE team and the pool of chess sponsors more diverse and international, opening new avenues for the sport while at the same time facing a whirlpool of challenges brought on by Covid and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Major FIDE events started taking place across the globe and not just in traditional chess nations, while FIDE also secured broadcasting rights, advertisers and began to look and feel more like a strong global sporting organisation.

"It was an interesting period. During that time, we laid the foundations for regulating the relationship between the chess world and the media", Llada says.

DING LIREN (left) and IAN NEPOMNIACHTCHI (right)
FIDE World Championship match, Astana 2023

Is the dream of chess being on big screens and having sponsorship like major sports such as football and basketball, realistic, or are we just kidding ourselves, I asked Llada.

"I think we have very high expectations. TV doesn't exist anymore as it did a few years ago. Nowadays, people do more things and don't have time to focus long. I think we have to keep our expectations in check. Having said that, I think the popularity of chess will increase."

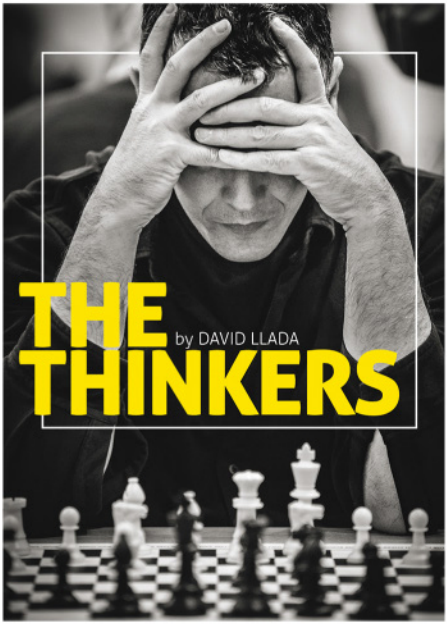
While Covid and the Queen's Gambit are widely considered catalysts for the big rise in chess popularity in recent years, Llada thinks this started happening even earlier, thanks to online content creators. "Thanks to the videos which started circulating online, people realised chess is not just a competitive game, but also entertainment."

Many players also took note of the changing tide, Llada notes. "During the pandemic, players started to stream. And they began to realise the importance of marketing - explaining what you do and trying to sell it. For decades before, the players only needed to make sure they made a good move and win on the chessboard. Now, those who are better with content are way more successful."

Speaking about his former organisation, Llada is worried that FIDE is at risk of losing its influence due to other, private, initiatives coming up, such as the so-called "Freestyle Chess" project, supported by Magnus Carlsen and a German financer Jan Henric Buettner, but also the existence of a dominant online chess company such as Chess.com.

"The next five years will bring some change. We will see what kind of but there will be a change. FIDE's leadership has done a lot of good things and has helped

HANS NIEMANN, World Junior Chess Championship "México 2023"



Llada's book THE THINKERS - on photography and chess

bring more standards and structure into chess. But there is a lot of negative energy in the chess world as well. Nothing big but a lot of small things. Whenever there's any spark, it all explodes into something big."

ICC AND THE THINKERS

After leaving FIDE, Llada was supposed to take a job in the tennis world, but - "in the last minute, chess managed to keep me - as I got a call from the new investors in the Internet Chess Club."

ICC was a pioneer of chess innovation in the early 2000s but then went into obscurity. More recently, a new set of investors - coming from the gaming industry - has taken interest in ICC, breathing new life into the project.

The current focus is on building an attractive and sustainable playing platform and trying to attract more women players. "It's challenging, but I'm optimistic, as we have an executive team that runs projects excellently, with a business-minded approach which is not common in the chess world."

David Llada is also working on a personal project. His book "Thinkers" - featuring his best chess photos - is considered a classic in the world of chess photography. Now, he is preparing the second part.

"Funny enough, this book will not feature photos of so many top players. Instead, we will have more women and talk about female role models. So, it will be a more feminine book."

"Chess and life share the fact that they are full of surprises, and you never know where the next move might take you," concludes David Llada.

FREUDIAN FEUD

RAYMOND KEENE, EXPLORES THE LIFELONG IDEOLOGICAL AND STYLISTIC RIVALRY BETWEEN TWO TITANS OF CLASSICAL CHESS THEORY: DR SIEGBERT TARRASCH AND ARON NIMZOWITSCH

By Grandmaster Raymond Keene OBE

I commence this month with a game I won at the age of 13, having studied and been impressed by Aron Nimzowitsch's strategic manual, *My System*. Of course, nowadays if you are not a Grandmaster by the age of 13, you may as well renounce any ambition of becoming a leading player, but back in the Cretaceous Period, reasonable competence by thirteen was considered quite precocious!

Bhuyia vs. Raymond Keene

Clapham Common CC, 1961, London

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e3 c5 5.♗d3 ♘c6 6.♘f3 ♗xc3+ 7.bxc3 d6 8.0-0 b6 9.e4 e5

Here I introduce the so called Hübner variation of the Nimzo-Indian, seven years before the late German Grandmaster officially invented it.

10.d5 ♘e7 11.a4?! There is one reference to a game, Kirk-Collas, Naujac sur Mer, 2012, which continued 11.♘e1. The engine's preference is for 11.♘h4.

11...♗g4 12.a5 ♘g6 13.♕a4+ ♗d7 14.♕a2 0-0 15.h3 Better is 15.♘e1.

15...♕c8 16.♗g5 Best is either, 16.♔h2 or 16.♖e1.

16...♘h5 17.♕c2 More consistent is 17.♖fb1.

17...f6 The engine preferred 17...h6 18.♗e3 ♘hf4 19.♖fb1 ♘xd3 20.♕xd3 bxa5 21.♖xa5 f5.

18.♗d2 ♗xh3

This sacrifice is just screaming to be played.

19.axb6? What should have been a terminal blunder, after which, the engine assessed White's position as -8.1 . White should continue, 19.♘h2 ♘gf4 20.gxh3 ♕xh3 21.♗xf4 ♘xf4.

19...♗xg2 Here I overlooked the right way to win. Black has much stronger in, 19...♕g4! 20.♘e1 ♗xg2 21.f3 ♗xf3+ with a decisive attack.

20.b7 ♕g4? What was good the move before is now inaccurate and loses a key tempo. The crusher is now 20... 21.♘h2 ♘h4 22.♕d1 ♘f3+ 23.♕xf3 ♗xf3 24.♘xf3 ♕g4+ 25.♔h2 ♕xf3.

21.♘h2 ♕h3 22.bxa8=♕ ♘h4

23.♕xf8+? Premature panic. After Black's errors, this overlooks the defence: 23.f4 ♖xa8 24.♗e1 ♕e3+ 25.♕f2.

23...♔xf8 24.♗e2? The final error permits Black a mate in three. After, 24.♕d1 ♗h1 25.♕g4 ♘f3+ 26.♕xf3 ♗xf3 27.♘xf3 ♕xf3 28.♗e3 ♘g3 29.♔h2 ♘xf1+ 30.♗xf1 ♕xe4 31.♖xa7 ♕h4+, White is worse but can still struggle on awhile.

24... ♗h1

White resigns, 0-1

The history of chess has been marked by numerous epic confrontations. These include Staunton vs. St Amant, a microcosmic struggle from 1843 which acquired particular relevance from memories of the traditional macrocosmic Anglo-French rivalry, culminating at the Battle of Waterloo. Later in the 19th century the rivalry between Steinitz and Zukertort spilled over from the chessboard into literary animosity. Then there was the Spassky vs. Fischer clash from 1972, which reflected the extreme tensions of the USSR vs. USA Cold War battle for global hegemony, coming, as it did, just a decade after the Cuban missile crisis. Thereafter, the colossal five-part Karpov vs. Kasparov series from 1984 to 1990, witnessed the switch of focus to internal Soviet hostilities, between the reforming forces of glasnost and perestroika, pitted against the old school sons of Lenin, who were fighting a reactionary rear-guard action to revive the principles of deathbed Communism.

Among the most notorious of such hostile conjunctions was the opposition between the great German Grandmaster, writer and chess theoretician, Dr Siegbert Tarrasch (1862-1934), and his ideological rival, the Latvian/Danish genius, Aron Nimzowitsch (1886-1935). In this case, though, with both protagonists emerging from the richly intellectual Central European Jewish culture, the antagonism was neither nationalistic nor political, but based on personal antipathy and seemingly opposing, indeed irreconcilable, views on the nature of chess strategy.

A fresh publication from New in Chess, *The Philosopher and the Housewife* (the latter being one of Nimzo's least flattering jibes about his great rival) analyses the conflagration between the two. The author, Willy Hendriks, adds for good measure, a third actor, the rogue Russian Alapin, into the drama, a man who seems to have terminally irritated everyone with whom he came into contact.

I have no hesitation in pronouncing Hendriks' work a masterpiece, the like of which we would be lucky to see once in a decade. If this book does not win the ECF book of the year, there is no justice in the universe. What are its virtues, let me count the ways:

Research: exhaustive
Scholarship: immaculate
Style: entertaining and dramatic
Comprehension of subject: masterly
Originality of thought: profoundly impressive.
Relevance: extreme…the debate about Tarrasch's favourite, the isolated queens pawn, and Nimzowitsch's ultimate desideratum, overprotection, rages to this day.
To put it mildly, this is the best and most riveting chess book which I have read for years!!

In chess terms, Dr Siegbert Tarrasch was the thinker who did most to strive towards making sense of the chaotic cosmos of chess, where there are more possibilities than atoms in the observable universe. He postulated order, method and rules, through which to comprehend the bewildering multiplicity of

Dr Siegbert Tarrasch; *Source: wikipedia.org*

Aron Nimzowitsch; *Source: FIDE Facebook*

potential inherent in the game. Thus there are said to be approximately 10 to the power of 81 atoms in the observable universe. To put that into context, the number (called a vigintisextillion) is the number 10 with 81 zeros behind it: 10,000,000,000

refused to budge. Predictably his clock flag fell and Tarrasch was declared to have lost on time. While Tarrasch (or as I jocularly refer to him: 'Dr T') was remonstrating against this verdict, someone in the audience spotted that Tarrasch had, in fact, written his name in the space for move one on his score-sheet, thus he had legitimately lost on time. Anglo - Irish fair play 1: German dogmatism 0.

At the Hamburg Tournament of 1910, "A-Team member" Dr T protested against the inclusion of the English master Frederick Yates, on the grounds that Yates was too weak for such an illustrious field. In fact, Yates was permitted to compete and did finish in last place, while, however, brilliantly demolishing Tarrasch on the way.

Destiny called on Tarrasch several times, but he regularly hung up, avoiding matches for the World Title against both Steinitz and Lasker, until Tarrasch finally committed himself to a challenge in 1908. At the pre-match meeting with the reigning champion, Tarrasch is alleged to have uttered, with his customary diplomatic aplomb, the withering sentence: "*to you Herr Lasker*, *I have just three words to say: check and mate*."

As for dogmatism, Tarrasch went so far as to condemn with " ? " denoting "weak move" such mainline variations as: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6? (Tarrasch insisted that Black's third move (3… c5) was the only correct move here). This latter opening variation is an aggressive bid for central space and is called The Tarrasch Defence, a variation of the Queen's Gambit Declined. His annotation with the "?" also was attached to 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2?, a line which paradoxically now bears Tarrasch's own name: The French Defence, Tarrasch Variation.

For all his idiosyncrasies, Tarrasch patently loved chess and devoted his creative life to every aspect of the game. This love was encapsulated in his statement: "Chess like love, like music, has the power to make men happy." Tarrasch was writing in a male dominated, Prussian, militaristic, pre-inclusive, pre-First World War society. Nowadays he would, I hope, have replaced 'happy men' with 'happy people'.

Tarrasch is reverently known as the great *Praeceptor Germaniae* (The Lawgiver of Germany). Indeed, amongst the various challengers for the World Title who failed to become World Champion, a special niche of honour is occupied by Dr. Tarrasch. Born in Breslau in 1862, Tarrasch was almost certainly the world's strongest player in the early 1890s. Unfortunately, he omitted to issue a challenge to the ageing Steinitz, and when Emanuel Lasker seized the chess throne in 1894, Tarrasch's dream of world domination evaporated.

Nevertheless, by his extensive writings and logical play, Tarrasch influenced all subsequent generations of German masters. Players such as Wolfgang Unzicker and Robert Hübner are clearly to be numbered in the classical Tarrasch mould.

Tarrasch was declared "World Tournament Champion" following his triumph at Ostend in 1907, but when he challenged Lasker the following year he was trounced. He won three games in this match and drew five. However, Lasker demonstrated his complete dominance of world chess at that time by scoring eight wins himself.

OSTEND, BELGIUM, 16 MAY - 13 JUNE 1907 (5)

		1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	**Tarrasch**	****	½½10	½1½½	½1½1	1½10	1½01	12.5
2	**Schlechter**	½½01	****	½010	11½½	½1½½	½½11	12.0
3	**Marshall**	½0½½	½101	****	0101	0½11	½½11	11.5
4	**Janowski**	½0½0	00½½	1010	****	1111	11½1	11.5
5	**Burn**	0½01	½0½½	1½00	0000	****	½111	8.0
6	**Chigorin**	0½10	½½00	½½00	00½0	½000	****	4.5

In his classic work *Masters of the Chessboard*, Richard Reti eloquently opined:

"Steinitz had rivals like Anderssen and later Blackburne and Zukertort, all of whom probably surpassed him in natural ability for chess. His general theory was so profound, however, that he defeated all of them in their matches with him. Lasker has emphasised the fact that the theory of Steinitz bears upon something much bigger than chess, namely upon life itself in all its complexities, the battles of which are reflected in chess as in a mirror. It follows, therefore, that the theory of Steinitz could be further developed in two directions. On the one hand, it could be elaborated philosophically, as a general theory of the fight, for which chess offers a clear and a definite example. On the other hand, it could be developed purely from the viewpoint of practical chess, with the idea of finding that form for the theory which would be most suitable for the practical execution of a chess game. Lasker followed the first lead, which took him somewhat too far off the beaten path to win any immediate following, while Tarrasch chose the other way, thereby giving the theory of chess the beginning of a scientific form and making him the teacher of the generation of chess masters after Steinitz."

Without doubt, Tarrasch was one of the most successful tournament players of all time. He became famous when in a period of seven years he won the five most important tournaments (Nuremberg 1888, Breslau 1889, Manchester 1890, Dresden 1892, Leipzig 1894). The most spectacular success of his career came with his first prize in the Emperor Franz Josef Jubilee Tournament of Vienna 1898, a colossal double-round event of 20 masters, in which he tied with the American superstar Harry Nelson Pillsbury, in the tournament proper, but then beat him in the play-off. Thereafter, Dr T scored only two more significant tournament successes: at Monte Carlo 1903 and in the Champions' Tournament at Ostend 1907. Organised in order to establish a "Tournament World Champion", this was to be his swan song, insofar as world dominance was concerned, for the following year Tarrasch met his nemesis in the form of his unsuccessful World Title challenge against Emanuel Lasker.

It seems clear that Tarrasch had been previously reluctant to risk the laurels he had gathered, in the one throw of a match against the champion. At the height of his early triumphs, he was offered a World Title match with Steinitz in Havana, but declined, and Dr T. also backed out from a virtually agreed Title Match against Lasker in 1904. When he did finally agree to meet the latter, he was in his 47th year and past his formidable best.

Tarrasch's enduring fame, however, rests on his writing, rather than sporting achievements. With his books *Dreihundert Schachpartien* (*Three Hundred Games of Chess*) published in 1895 and *Die Moderne Schachpartie* (*The Modern Game of Chess*) published in 1912, as well as his innumerable chess columns and articles, he became, as noted above, the celebrated Praeceptor Germaniae, and with it, of the world.

Developing and popularising Steinitz's theory of the accumulation of small advantages, he yet differed in his interpretation of what constitutes such small advantages. He valued the concept of mobility above all and, as the result of this approach, he became the great advocate of constriction strategy, mainly for White; and for Black, 'freeing' moves, especially in the opening such as The Tarrasch Defence to the Queen's Gambit has since been adopted at the highest level by world champions such as Emanuel Lasker, José Capablanca, Garry Kasparov and Boris Spassky, the last named deploying it as a principal weapon to gain the world title against Petrosian in 1969.

Ultimately, the Tarrasch project failed to achieve its ambitious aims, since

chess (as with the Bongcloud Attack, even claiming as a victim Grandmaster Wesley So) cannot be reduced to simple formulae. Nevertheless, the effort was in its own way heroic and Tarrasch's achievements still live on in the face of the largely unfathomable universe of chess possibilities, of which AlphaZero has granted us a tantalising glimpse.

Here are links to three famous Tarrasch victories and also one loss:

The first win is against a titan of the day, and it is fascinating to see how Dr T steamrolls his victim in such systematic fashion. The game: Tarrasch vs. Harry Nelson Pillsbury in Vienna 1898.

Tarrasch vs. Pillsbury

Position after 31… f6

32.♖e6!! ♗e5 34.g4 ♕c7 35.gxh5 ♖xh5 36.♖e8 ♕d7 37.♖g8+ ♔h7 38.♕g2 ♕f5 39.♗e4 ♖h2 40.♖xg6 ♖xg2+ 41.♖xg2 Black resigns, 1-0.

The second: Tarrasch vs. Emanuel Lasker from Dr T's defeat in the World Championship match in 1908. Although Tarrasch won only three games out of 16 in his match against Lasker, it should be recalled that in fifty match games against such leading masters of the day such as Frank Marshall, David Janowski and Carl Schlechter, between 1907 and 1910, Lasker lost a mere four games!

Tarrasch vs. Lasker

Position after 22. ♕g3

22...♕e6 23.h3 ♖d8 24.♖ed2 ♖e5 25.♗h6 ♕g6 26.♗f4 ♖e6 27.♗xd6 ♕h5 28.♕g4 ♕xg4 29.hxg4 ♖e4 30.♗xc5 ♖xd2 31.♖xd2 h5 32.♖d6 Black resigns, 1-0.

The following game was awarded the third brilliancy prize, whereupon Tarrasch, with his accustomed tact, took it upon himself to lambast in print the members of the judging panel. Aron Nimzowitsch vs Tarrasch, St Petersburg 1914.

Nimzowitsch vs. Tarrasch

Position after 19. exd4

19...♗xh2+ 20.♔xh2 ♕h4+ 21.♔g1 ♗xg2 22.f3 ♖fe8 23.♘e4 ♕h1+ 24.♔f2 ♗xf1 25.d5 f5 26.♕c3 ♕g2+ 27.♔e3 ♖xe4+ 28.fxe4 f4+ 29.♔xf4 ♖f8+ 30.♔e5 ♕h2+ 31.♔e6 ♖e8+ 32.♔d7 ♗b5 Checkmate 0-1.

And, to conclude, the disaster for Dr T at Hastings in 1895 against James Mason.

Mason vs. Tarrasch

Position after 30. ♕c3

In this position Dr. Tarrasch, under the impression that he had made his 30th move already, exceeded his time, and the game was claimed by Mason. There can be no doubt that, on the merits of the position, Dr. Tarrasch ought to have won the game. The simplest plan seems to be to double the Rooks on the King's file, after which White seems quite hopeless; the scope of his Knights being very limited and a defence of the weak Queen's pawn in the long run impossible. (Mr Mason drew his opponent's attention to his clock more than once, and informed him that he had only made twenty-nine moves, but unfortunately the doctor had written his name at move one, and was sure he had made thirty moves).

As Daniel Johnson, my editor at *TheArticle* (where I write a weekly chess column) wrote: "I urge chess-lovers to play over the game given by Ray Keene above between Tarrasch and Pillsbury, Vienna 1898. It's strikingly modern, fresh and original, belying Tarrasch's reputation as an old-fashioned classical player. The system beginning with Bd3 against the Berlin Defence to the Ruy Lopez strikingly breaks most of his own rules. All the games Tarrasch played against Pillsbury, beginning with the latter's famous victory at Hastings 1895, are superb. They were evenly matched (5 wins each and two draws) and apparently trusted one another sufficiently for Pillsbury to consult Tarrasch as a doctor about the syphilis that eventually killed him. Sadly, medical science was not advanced enough to save the great American grandmaster from an early and terrible death. Tarrasch was an eminent doctor, much in demand in Munich, and hence never a professional grandmaster. Given that his medical practice limited the time he could devote to chess, his achievements as a player and writer are all the more impressive.

At the perihelion of his early triumphs Tarrasch was offered a World Title match against Steinitz in Havana, but declined. Later he backed out from a virtually agreed Title match against Lasker in 1904. His pretext was that he was too preoccupied with his medical practice, but that did not prevent him from playing extended matches against such opponents as Mikhail Tchigorin, the leading Russian contender, and Frank Marshall, the US champion. The genuine reasons for repeatedly holding back must have been deeper and darker than mere professional obligations, but whatever they were, we shall never know. When Tarrasch did finally agree to challenge Lasker, he was in his 47th year and well past his best. In terms of active play, Tarrasch was great, but could have been greater. When destiny called, he twice hung up the phone.

Tarrasch's immortal fame, however, rests on his writing rather than sporting achievements. With his superbly written books *Dreihundert Schachpartien* (Three Hundred Games of Chess) of 1895 and *Die Moderne Schachpartie* (The Modern Game of Chess) in 1912, as well as his innumerable chess columns and articles, he acquired a reputation as the *Praeceptor Germaniae:* chess teacher of Germany and, by extension, the world. Tarrasch valued the concept of mobility above all. A Freudian explanation for this has

been suggested by the German/Jewish/Irish writer Wolfgang Heidenfeld: that Tarrasch attached exaggerated importance to mobility on the chessboard, because in life his own mobility was gravely restricted by a club foot. As the result of this approach he was the supreme advocate of "freeing" moves, especially in the opening, of which the defence to the Queen's Gambit which bears his name is a typical example (The Tarrasch Defence: 1. d4 d5 2. c4 e6 3. ♘c3 c5).

The apodictic dogmatism of his opinions may be somewhat off-putting to a modern audience. For example, as we have seen already, Tarrasch wrote that, after the moves 1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nd2 the response 3…c5! literally "*refutes*" White's third move, since Black can thereby force the acquisition of an isolated queen's pawn. It was a particular Tarrasch fetish that possession of an isolated queen's pawn automatically conferred an advantage, a view not entirely endorsed by theory and practice today. Tarrasch was dogmatic, but not alone in his dogmatism. Any reading of the works of Tarrasch's contemporary, Sigmund Freud, will rapidly reveal a similar self-assurance, which brooks no countervailing alternative opinion. Tarrasch, indeed, was a kind of Freud of the chessboard.

According to Heidenfeld, it was exactly this dogmatism which made Tarrasch's teaching so effective. His was a time when amateurs still had to learn that a game of chess should not be a haphazard conglomeration of unrelated ideas, but a logical whole.

In his authoritative book, *Chess and Chessmasters*, magisterially translated by Harry Golombek from the original Swedish, Grandmaster Gideon Stahlberg concurs that at the beginning of the 20th century, Tarrasch occupied a unique place in the chess pantheon. His great tournament successes had granted him a richly deserved reputation as a player, while his widespread literary activities energetically publicised his theories, so that it was not long before he had built up a significant school of followers. "*Thus he became the great teacher*, *whose every word was listened to with hushed attention*. *To Tarrasch*, *chess was above all a science*. *The game followed strict laws and woe to him who broke one of them!*"

Suddenly, though, there arose a tempest of contradicting opinion, particularly from one of the younger, less experienced masters: Aron Nimzowitsch. The Balt rapidly made his mark by original, apparently irrational, play, and fought his way into the leading group of the world's Masters. After achieving this entry into the "Magic Circle", he astonished the chess world by a vehement attack against the *ancien régime* — that is, against the precepts of Tarrasch. At the same time, Nimzowitsch embarked on a fierce campaign on behalf of his own theories.

Nimzowitsch accused Tarrasch of routine dogmatism, and, as we have seen with the case of 3…c5! to a 21st century observer, such an accusation does indeed seem justified. Nimzowitsch also opposed Tarrasch's conception of the openings, and in substitution propounded a theory of development which welcomed constricted yet resilient positions that were rich in potentialities, just such positions as Tarrasch normally condemned on principle. In my own games, I have frequently followed the Nimzowitschian precepts, heading for seemingly cramped structures which were, however, packed with possibilities for decisive breakouts.

Aron Nimzowitsch, like Tarrasch himself, holds an honoured position amongst those outstanding personalities of chess history who have narrowly failed in their ambition to become world champion. Nimzowitsch was perhaps the most colourful, making his impressive mark not only with his successful play but also with his profound writings and his eccentric behaviour away from the chessboard.

Born in Riga into the Jewish family of Niemzowitsch, he learnt the moves at an early age from his father (an accomplished master in his own right) but it was not until 1904, while in Germany (ostensibly to study mathematics) that Nimzowitsch began to concentrate on chess. Unlike Tarrasch, Nimzowitsch was never seduced by the temptations of an alternative professional career, away from the chessboard.

At the start of his learning trajectory, Nimzowitsch's talent seemed to lie in the purely tactical and combinational field, but several failures led him to undertake a complete revision of his chess ideas, placing greater emphasis on positional play, blockading strategy and consolidation. With his changed outlook, Nimzowitsch achieved significant successes, including equal second, behind Rubinstein, at San Sebastian 1912 and equal first with Alekhine at the All-Russian Championship in St Petersburg 1913.

The Great War, combined with the Russian Revolution, brought an abrupt halt to Nimzowitsch's activities. In 1920, he left Latvia for Scandinavia, changing his name in the process from *Niemzowitsch* to *Nimzowitsch*. At first, he took refuge in Sweden but eventually settled in Denmark. Nimzowitsch's return to tournament competition in the early 1920's was disastrous but gradually he played himself into form, securing several notable successes in the mid-1920's, including equal first with Rubinstein at Marienbad 1925, first at Dresden 1926 (scoring 8½ out of nine, ahead of Alekhine and Rubinstein) and first at Hannover 1926. He also garnered two first prizes in strong tournaments in London during 1927. It was during this rich period that Nimzowitsch's most influential work appeared: *Mein System* (My System). Published in 1925, it underwent several revisions until 1928 and is still a bestseller in many translations over the entire chess-playing world.

Nevertheless, the World Title still eluded him. Nimzowitsch took third place in the prestigious New York tournament of 1927, behind Capablanca and Alekhine; his brilliant first prize at Carlsbad 1929 was achieved ahead of Capablanca, Spielmann, Rubinstein, Euwe, Vidmar and Bogoljubow, yet Alekhine was not competing. His performance at Carlsbad possibly justified Nimzowitsch in adopting the title "Crown Prince of the chess world" which he then assumed — somewhat pompously, given that he never managed to beat Capablanca. Yet Alexander Alekhine, the reigning monarch, refused to give way and the crown prince never managed to secure the funds for a world championship match. Nimzowitsch's best results in major tournaments from 1929 onwards (2nd at San Remo 1930, 3rd at Bled 1931) were achieved in the shadow of the mighty Alekhine, against whom he won three games, lost nine and drew nine. Ill-health caused Nimzowitsch's sudden decline in the mid-1930s and he died, just 48 years old, at the Hareskov Sanatorium, Copenhagen, in 1935.

In his playing style Nimzowitsch belonged to the so-called Hypermodern School, which held (*inter alia*) that control of the centre did not necessarily imply occupation by pawns. Adherence to these views, combined with a decided mutual incompatibility, brought him into frequent opposition with the great exponent of the classical school, Tarrasch. Neither master was averse to self-adulation and the bitterness emanating from their first meeting in 1904 was never entirely eradicated. In fact, hostility towards Tarrasch and his works was a recurring theme of Nimzowitsch's literary endeavours.

However, Nimzowitsch's major contribution to chess literature consisted not in his ridicule of Tarrasch, nor yet in the discovery of a novel method of play, but in his elaboration of a new chess vocabulary which made intelligible

the hitherto but vaguely articulated strategy of master-strength players. Nimzowitsch possessed an unrivalled facility for capturing the essence of an already known operation or structure with a memorable and meaningful word or phrase, which thereby increased speed of comprehension and assisted clarity of thought. Nimzowitsch introduced into chess terminology such phrases as "the passed pawn's lust to expand", "the mysterious rook move", "prophylaxis", "7th rank absolute" and "hanging pawns". It is an established phenomenon that rapid advances in performance are often immediately preceded by advances in modes of expression, and we may indeed detect an upsurge in the general level of chess after the publication of *My System*.

Nimzowitsch's writings were penned with such enthusiastic and allusive wit, that only the most hardened could resist the appeal of his message. Consider the following passage on Tarrasch's favourite hobby horse, the isolated queen's pawn: "… we no longer consider it necessary to render the enemy isolani absolutely immobile; on the contrary, we like to give him the illusion of freedom, rather than shut him up in a cage (the principle of the large zoo applied to the small beast of prey)."

The rivalry between Tarrasch and Nimzowitsch is a common trope of chess literature, yet sometimes (as with Hendriks) I wonder whether the gulf between their relative visions of chess strategy is quite so wide as is commonly supposed. Nimzowitsch was known as an early advocate of 3. e5 against the Caro Kann Defence, namely 1. e4 c6 2. d4 d5 and now 3.e5. Yet, where did this advance first crop up? It was played by Tarrasch himself against Nimzowitsch in their game at San Sebastian in 1912.

I have frequently maintained that chess as a game of war, mirrors battlefield strategy of the day. Thus chess originally reflected the chariots, foot soldiers, cavalry and war elephants of the ancient Indian army. During the Renaissance the chess queen acquired her rampant new powers, a metaphor for the new distance weapon, the cannon. Most strikingly, given that the prime *modus operandi* of warfare in 1914-1918 consisted of trench and blockade operations, both on land in Flanders and at sea, after the Naval Battle of Jutland, the blockade in chess came to the fore. Indeed, both Tarrasch and Nimzowitsch were expert blockaders. There is yet another point of chess board consanguinity between the two: it is normally held that Tarrasch preferred to occupy the centre with pawns, while Nimzowitsch preferred central domination by pieces. This was an argument made vehemently by that Pontifex Maximus of Hypermodernism, Richard Réti, in his classic *Masters of the Chessboard*, published posthumously in English in 1933. In that context, the win by Nimzowitsch against the strong Polish master Georg Salwe was considered revolutionary. However, now examine the Tarrasch win against Max Kuerschner, the president of Tarrasch's own chess club in his home city of Nuremberg, played 21 years earlier. These two games are strikingly similar and it is hard to credit that the two victors maintained an exclusively diametric opposition of views on all chess strategic thinking.

Nimzowitsch vs. Salwe

Position after 7. dxc5

Tarrasch vs. Kuerschner

Position after 11. dxc5

As a modest incursion into the realms of speculation, it almost seems that Freud is even more relevant than might at first sight appear. Freud's Oedipus Complex requires the son to kill the father. Nimzowitsch's attempt to slay Tarrasch, who was 24 years older, could in fact have been a reaction to their overt similarities. Was Nimzowitsch trying to kill his chessboard father?

What, moreover, one might ask, can modern chess games tell us about contemporary warfare? I enter here the realms of further extreme speculation, but Bongcloud openings (1. e4 e5 2. ♔e2) early queen sorties based on ♕h5 and deliberate tempo loss (1. c3 followed swiftly by c4) all practised by the elite, including the current first ranked player and former World Champion, Magnus Carlsen, indicate to me that the direction of conflict is towards asymmetric warfare, involving terrorism, surprise, psychological combat and guerilla tactics, rather than the stately orchestration of grand strategy, as might have appealed to a Capablanca, a Botvinnik, a Karpov or indeed, Tarrasch and Nimzowitsch themselves.

Meanwhile, within the confines of the chessboard, Nimzowitsch's words still ring true: "Ridicule can do much, for example, it can embitter the existence of young talents; but one thing is not given to it, to put a stop permanently to the incursion of new and powerful ideas."

The main games I have selected this month are two of my own. In my win against Tony Miles I side with Tarrasch and demonstrate the virtues of the isolated queen's pawn. Meanwhile ….In my win against Basman, I switch to following Nimzowitsch and show how relentless overprotection of the key point on e5 can unleash elemental fury, once the time comes to activate the forces in support of the designated strongpoint. In this case White has a knight, rook, bishop and queen all accumulating energy in contact with the focal square. In truth, both of these outstanding players and teachers, had a vast store of important information to impart to future generations, as Hendriks rightly proves in his latest magnificent contribution to the elite literature of chess.

Most strikingly of all, at a time when antisemitism is once again rearing its hideous head, it is worthwhile recalling that both Aron Nimzowitsch and Siegbert Tarrasch (not to mention Sigmund Freud) were great Jewish teachers and thinkers. Grandmaster and writer, Nimzowitsch introduced such memorable phrases as : 'the passed pawn's lust to expand', 'first restrain, then blockade, finally destroy' and 'the mysterious rook move'. Brilliant phraseology often aids comprehension, and Nimzowitsch was a master of the telling epithet.

Nimzowitsch elevated the interpretation of blockading strategy (also a Tarrasch trademark) to new heights, as in his celebrated win with the black pieces against Johner from Dresden 1926. This was notably the forerunner of the so called Hübner system in the Nimzo-Indian, with which I introduced this column and which Bobby Fischer deployed to such devastating effect in game five of his celebrated match victory in 1972, against the incumbent champion, Boris Spassky in 1972.

Johner vs. Nimzowitsch

Dresden, 1926

Position after 16. ♔h2

Spassky vs. Fischer

Reykjavik, 1972

Position after 27.♕c2

Nimzowitsch, is regarded by many as the author of what might be termed the chessplayers' strategic Bible, *My System*, but excoriated by others as irrelevant or at times even incomprehensible.

First of all, let me establish Nimzowitsch's credentials as a role model.

In terms of opening theory, his most enduring contributions have been the Nimzo-Indian Defence and the complex of systems starting with 1. b3 or 1. ♘f3 followed by b3. As a player he defeated Alekhine, Lasker and Euwe in individual games and won, or shared first prize, in such powerful events as Marienbad 1925 (11/15), Dresden 1926 (8½/9), London 1927 (8/11) and above all Carlsbad 1929 (15/21) where he triumphed ahead of Capablanca, Spielmann, Rubinstein and Euwe.

So, why have some critics denigrated the Jewish Grand Maestro's contribution to chess knowledge, science and practice?

Let us take four pillars of his thinking, the blockade, prophylaxis, centralisation and over-protection. Those in the anti-Nimzo brigade have pointed out that the blockade existed before Nimzowitsch, notably and ironically in the games of his arch enemy Dr Siegbert Tarrasch. Nevertheless, Nimzowitsch elevated the interpretation of blockading strategy to new heights, as we have seen from the links above.

Centralisation, too, was known and practised well before Nimzowitsch came on the scene. To be fair, I do not think that Nimzowitsch claimed to have invented either centralisation or the blockade, merely to have observed such mechanisms and refined them. However, with chess being a game which simulates warfare, I do believe that the prime battle modes of the First World War, trench combat and naval strangulation, did influence Nimzowitsch's blockade-oriented writings of the early 1920s.

This brings us to prophylaxis, the anticipation, restriction and prevention of the opponents' potential for attack. Again, I think that Nimzowitsch observed this methodology in the games of contemporary masters, and his chief contribution was to identify and name it. Certainly, world champion Tigran Petrosian (1963-1969) made it completely clear that prophylaxis, as taught by Nimzowitsch through Petrosian's trainer Ebralidze, was highly influential in forming his own chess style. His win in the following game against Bobby Fischer is a notable example of the genre.

KARLSBAD, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, 31 JULY - 26 AUGUST 1929																							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	Pts
1	Nimzowitsch	*	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	½	½	1	1	½	½	½	1	0	1	½	1	½	1	15
2	Capablanca	½	*	0	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	½	1	14½
2	Spielmann	0	1	*	0	½	½	½	½	1	0	½	½	1	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	14½
4	Rubinstein	½	½	1	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	0	½	1	13½
5	Becker	½	0	½	½	*	1	1	1	0	0	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	0	12
5	Vidmar	0	½	½	½	0	*	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	0	½	½	0	1	1	1	1	12
5	Euwe	0	½	½	½	0	0	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	12
8	Bogoljubov	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	½	1	1	1	11½
9	Grünfeld	½	½	1	0	1	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	0	½	0	1	½	1	½	1	½	11
10	Canal	½	½	1	0	1	½	0	½	½	*	1	½	0	0	½	½	0	1	0	½	1	1	10½
10	Mattison	0	0	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	*	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	½	0	½	1	10½
12	Tartakower	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	1	½	½	0	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	10
12	Maróczy	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	1	0	1	0	½	*	0	0	0	1	½	1	1	½	1	10
12	Colle	½	0	0	½	½	0	0	0	1	1	0	½	1	*	1	½	1	0	½	0	1	1	10
12	Treybal	½	0	0	0	½	1	0	0	½	½	1	½	1	0	*	½	½	0	1	1	½	1	10
16	Sämisch	0	1	0	½	½	½	½	0	1	½	0	½	1	½	½	*	½	0	½	½	1	0	9½
16	Yates	1	0	½	½	0	½	½	0	0	1	0	½	0	0	½	½	*	1	½	½	1	1	9½
18	Johner	0	0	0	0	½	1	0	1	½	0	0	½	½	1	1	1	0	*	½	0	½	1	9
18	Marshall	½	0	0	½	0	0	½	½	0	1	½	½	0	½	0	½	½	½	*	1	1	1	9
20	Gild	0	0	0	1	0	0	½	0	½	½	1	½	0	1	0	½	½	1	0	*	½	½	8
21	Thomas	½	½	0	½	½	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	*	1	6
22	Menchik	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	½	0	*	3

Petrosian vs. Fischer

Candidates, Bled-Zagreb-Belgrade,1959

Position after 24… ♕h5

25.♖a7 ♕g6 26.♔h1 ♕h5 27.f4 ♘e4 28.♖xc7 g5 29.♗xb6 ♔h8 30.♗xe4 fxe4 31.♗c5 ♖g8 Black resigns, 1-0

Now we come to the more opaque concept of over-protection. Even ex-world champion Magnus Carlsen has confessed to a certain bafflement where this is concerned and - make no mistake - over-protection was very much Nimzowitsch's primary strategic insight and was exceedingly close to his heart. Overprotection is to Nimzowitsch as $E=mc^2$ is to Einstein or Mind Mapping to Tony Buzan.

Prophylaxis and the mysterious rook move are far simpler to grasp, even in the extreme mode of Garry Kasparov's doubling of his rooks on e7 and e8 in the closed e-file in game 24 of the 1985 world championship match against Karpov, the game which crowned Kasparov as the youngest ever world champion.

Karpov vs. Kasparov

Moscow, 1985, game 24

Position after 24… ♖ce8

Over-protection is less clear, both in terms of its relevance and its usefulness. What I think has been overlooked is that the concept of over-protection (concentrating force on a key point in order to maximise energy) has morphed into specific opening variations, where it is just second nature and disguised from its original function as a discrete strategic device.

As is well known, Nimzowitsch favoured 3.e5 against both the French and Caro-Kann defences. The latter is now more in vogue than the former, though Nimzowitsch himself predicated the rationale for both as being over-protection of e5. A clearer instance of over-protection evolving into a popular opening variation is White's control over d5 in most lines of the highly fashionable Sveshnikov variation of the Sicilian.

Perhaps the clearest manifestation, though, is White's concentration of force behind his e5 pawn in many variations of the King's Indian attack.

The example game which follows reveals a consistent policy of over-protection, with White over-protecting the pawn on e5 with knight, bishop, queen and rook. Once the e5 pawn advances, the forces in support break out with elemental fury and sweep Black from the board.

Raymond Keene vs. Michael John Basman

Preparation Tournament for Student Olympiad, 1967, Bognor Regis

1.e4 e6 2.d3 b5!? An eccentricity quite in Basman's style. However, the move also has some positional basis in that an eventual advance of the queenside pawns forms a valuable black resource against the King's Indian Attack.

3.♘f3 ♗b7 4.g3 ♘f6 5.♗g2 ♗c5?! But this is much harder to justify, since the king's bishop is normally needed on the kingside for defensive purposes.

6.0-0 0-0 7.♘bd2 d6 8.♕e2 ♗b6 Necessary if Black is to mobilise his c-pawn.

9.♔h1 c5 10.♘h4 ♘c6 11.c3 d5 12.e5 ♘d7 13.f4 b4 14.♘df3

White's kingside attack proceeds unopposed, largely due to the absence of the useful defensive king's bishop.

14...♕c7 15.f5! exf5 16.♗f4 ♖ae8 17.♖ae1 bxc3 18.bxc3 d4 19.c4 ♖e6 Although White's e-pawn is blockaded, there are other ways of prosecuting the assault.

20.♘xf5 f6? Threatening to destroy White's strong point at e5, but the

scheme is over-optimistic and allows the energy in White's position to burst forth by means of a positional queen sacrifice.

21.♘xg7! ♔xg7 22.exf6+ ♖fxf6 23.♕xe6! ♖xe6 24.♖xe6 White avoids 24.♗xc7? with only a rook for two minor pieces. White has now given up queen and knight for two rooks, but Black's famous king's bishop is locked out of play, while his other pieces cannot participate in the defence of his king.

24...♕c8 25.♗h6+ ♔g8 26.♘g5 Threatening ♗d5 and ♖f7**.**

26...♘ce5 27.♗xb7 ♕xb7+ Although Black gains a temporary respite with this check his queen must immediately return to the back rank to prevent ♖e8+.

28.♔g1 ♕b8 29.♖e7 ♗a5 30.♖g7+ ♔h8 31.♘f7+ ♘xf7 32.♖gxf7! Threatening both ♖xd7 and ♖f8+.

32...♗d2?! Obviously desperation. If 32...♕c8 33.♖xd7+- or 32...♕d6 33.♖f8+ ♘xf8 34.♖xf8+ ♕xf8 35.♗xf8 with a simple win in the endgame.

33.♗xd2 ♕d6 34.♖xd7 After 34...♕xd7 35.♗h6 wins at once.

Black resigns, 1-0.

To conclude: amongst those prominent individuals who fail to appreciate Nimzowitsch, I would, among others, include Yasser Seirawan, Jan Gustafsson and World Champion Max Euwe (1935-1937), with Magnus Carlsen somewhat ambivalent. Some, it must be said, exude more than a whiff of antisemitism, but on the basis of 'if the cap fits, wear it', I am advised by Messrs Sue, Grabbit and Runne, that I best leave it there.

In the Nimzowitsch camp, I would firmly place Bent Larsen, Tigran Petrosian, Mikhail Botvinnik (who loved the Nimzowitschian e4/c4 pawn structure in the English opening and who was also a staunch upholder of Nimzowitsch's favourite response 3... Bb4 in the Winawer French). Not to overlook the Icelandic former world title candidate, Johann Hjartarson, who gave ample recognition to Nimzowitsch in a keynote lecture in 2019 at the Gibraltar Masters.

Raymond Keene vs. Tony Miles

Hastings International, 1975/76, rd. 13

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.♘c3 ♘c6 4.e3 e6 5.d4 d5 6.cxd5 ♘xd5 7.♗d3 cxd4 Perhaps 7...♗e7 is more accurate, maintaining the central tension.

8.exd4 ♗e7 9.O–O O–O

One of the classical isolated queen's pawn positions, in which White's extra space and attacking chances compensate for the structural weakness.

10.♖e1 ♘f6 A solid alternative is 10...♗f6 11.♗e4 etc.

11.♗g5!? Fashionable was 11.a3, but the text is not bad. All White's pieces are coming out at great speed while Black still has problems completing his queenside development.

11...♘b4 The immediate 11...b6 deserves attention. Black's plan to dominate the blockade square d5 instantly is possibly too straightforward.

12. ♗b1 b6 12... ♗d7 is a more cautious treatment, planning a later development with ...♗c6.

13.♘e5 ♗b7 It might look as if Black is over the worst but now a vicious attack appears almost out of nowhere.

14.♖e3!!

A difficult and bold move. When I played it I already had to be sure that my kingside attacking chances would be sufficient compensation for my lack of queenside development and the clumsy position of my rook on the third rank. Strangely, a similar rook manoeuvre occurred in a game Filip - Pogats, played 14 years previously, but neither Miles nor I had any notion of this until I discovered the theoretical background after our game. Incidentally, the Filip game ended in a draw.

14...g6

To prevent 15.♗xf6 ♗xf6 16.♗xh7+ ♔xh7 17.♕h5+ and 18.♖h3.

15.♖g3! It looks odd to aim the rook against a granite wall (g6) but the granite has faulty foundations. In contrast, the more natural 15.♖h3 achieves nothing.

15...♖c8?! At the time the course I feared most was 15...♘c6! 16.♗h6 ♕xd4! when Black breaks White's attack by sacrificing the exchange. In view of the lack of weaknesses in Black's position it would then be a distinctly uphill struggle for White to win. After the move played the solution became susceptible to precise tactical analysis.

16.♗h6 ♖e8 17.a3 ♘c6 17...♘bd5 does not alter things significantly.

18.♘xg6! hxg6 19.♗xg6 Apart from capturing the bishop Black has two other defences: a) 19...♗f8 20.♗c2+ ♔h8 21.♗xf8 ♖xf8 22.♕d2 ♘g8 23.♖h3+ ♔g7 24.♖h7+ (Fritz gives 24.♕f4) 24...♔f6 25.d5+-; b) 19...♗d6 20.♗xf7+ ♔xf7 21.♖g7+ ♔f8 22.♕f3+-. In this position Black is quite helpless, in spite of his extra material.

19...fxg6 20.♕b1! An original square for the queen in a mating combination, but neither 20.♕d3 ♘e5 nor 20.♕c2 ♘e5! 21.dxe5 ♘e4 (exploiting the pin on the c-file) would be good enough for White.

20...♘e5 21.dxe5 ♘e4 Without the c-file pin (see above note for 20.♕b1!) this is sheer desperation.

22.♘xe4 ♔h7 23.♘f6+ ♗xf6 24.♕xg6+ ♔h8 25.♗g7+ ♗xg7 26.♕xg7 checkmate, 1-0.

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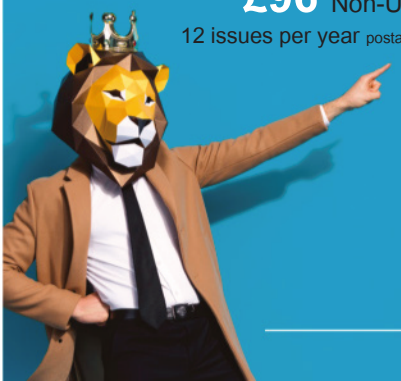


TOURNAMENT REPORT:
JERSEY INTERNATIONAL OPEN

By IM Shaun Taulbut

There were two nine round swiss tournaments held in Jersey in April, the Open and Holiday tournaments. The prizes in the Open attracted a good entry with the tournament being won by the highest rated player, Eduardas Rozentalis.

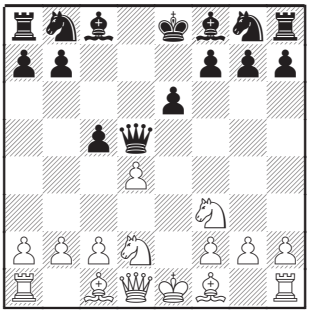
Here we will take a look at two of the most interesting games from the tournament.

Rozentalis beat his closest rival Mohr in the following game, showing fine positional play and thus won the first prize of £1500. Mohr won the second prize of £750.

Eduardas **Rozentalis** – Georg **Mohr**

Jersey International 2025
St Clement Bay JCI (4.1)

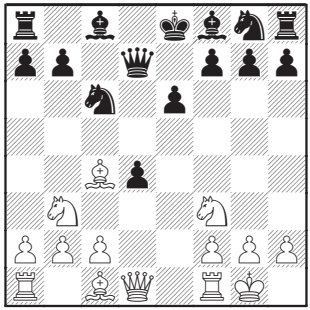
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 c5 4.exd5 ♕xd5 5.♘gf3X



This variation of the Tarrasch leads to a small edge for White but Black has a solid position.

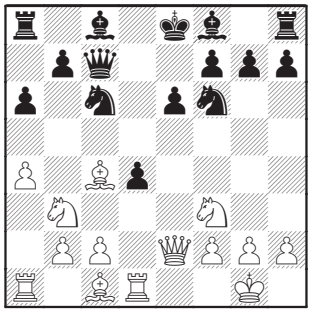
5...cxd4 6.♗c4 ♕d7 A good alternative is 6...♕d6 7.0-0 ♘f6 8.♘b3 ♘c6 9.♘xd4 ♘xd4 10.♘xd4, with a slight edge for White.

7.0-0 ♘c6 8.♘b3



8...a6 9.a4 ♘f6 10.♕e2 White aims to capture on d4 with his rook on d1, targeting the black queen, so Black chooses to reposition his queen immediately.

10...♕c7 11.♖d1



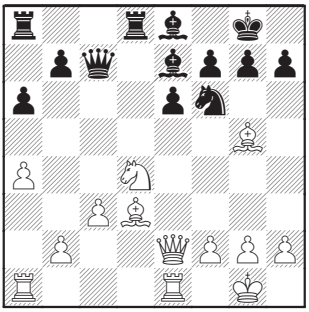
11...♗e7 12.♘bxd4 ♗d7 13.♗g5 0-0 14.c3 If 14.♘xc6 ♗xc6 15.♘e5 ♖ad8, with equality.

14...♖fd8 Black has a solid position, which is difficult to break down.

15.♗d3 White repositions the bishop towards the black king.

15...♘xd4 16.♘xd4 ♗e8 Black aims to exchange pieces while keeping his kingside protected.

17.♖e1

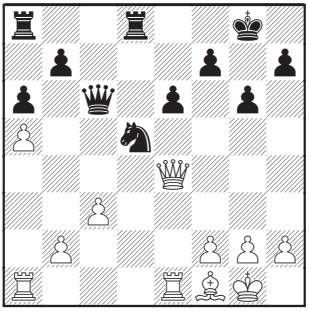


17...♘d5 18.♕e4 If 18.♗xe7 ♘xe7 after 18.♘xe6 fxe6 19.♕xe6+ ♗f7 20.♗xh7+ ♔xh7 21.♕xf7 ♗xg5 22.♕f5+ ♔g8 23.♕xg5 ♘f6, Black is better.

18...g6 19.♗xe7 ♕xe7 20.a5 An important move, fixing the black pawn on b7; White changes tack after failing to make progress on the kingside.

20...♕c7 21.♗f1 White decides to reposition the bishop to the long diagonal, aiming at b7.

21...♗c6 22.♘xc6 ♕xc6



The position is equal but White continues with his plan of redeveloping the bishop, aiming at b7.

23.g3 White prepares the fianchetto.

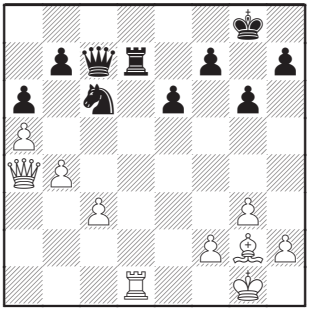
23...♖d7 24.♕a4 Offering the queen exchange, but Black decides to keep the queens on the board.

24...♕c7 24...♕xa4 25.♖xa4 ♘e7 26.♗g2 ♖c8 is equal.

25.♗g2 ♖ad8 26.♖ad1 ♘e7 Black exchanges rooks.

27.♖xd7 ♖xd7 28.♖♖d1 ♘c6 If 28...♖xd1+ 29.♕xd1 ♕xa5 30.♕d7 ♘f5 31.♕xb7 with slight edge for White.

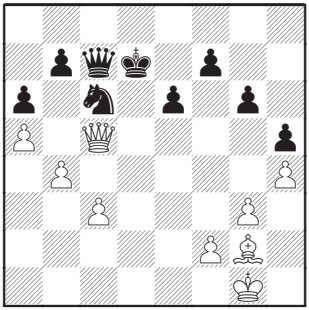
29.b4



White protects the pawn on a5 setting up a good pawn chain.

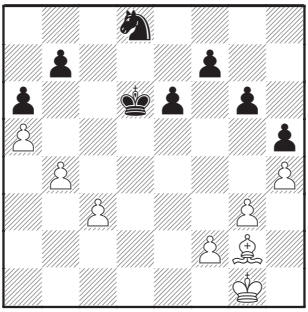
29...h5 30.h4 ♖xd1+ 31.♕xd1 ♔f8 Centralising the king is sensible. The black king is more active than the white, at this stage.

32.♕d2 ♔e7 33.♕g5+ ♔d7 34.♕c5



White now has a slight edge because of the bishop on g2.

34...♘d8 35.♕d4+ ♕d6 36.♕xd6+ ♔xd6

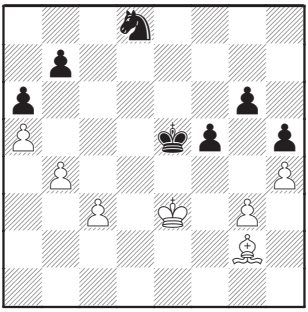


White has a slight edge due to the pressure on b7 and starts to bring his king into play.

37.♔f1 e5 38.f4 White judges correctly that Black cannot go after the pawn on f4 because of the weakness of b7 and therefore gains more control over the central squares.

38...f5 If 38...exf4 39.gxf4 f5 (39...♘e6 40.♗xb7 ♘xf4 41.♗xa6 ♘d5 42.♗b5 ♘xc3 43.♗e8 ♔e7 44.a6 ♘d5 45.a7 ♘b6 46.♗c6 winning) 40.♔e2 ♔c7 41.♔e3.

39.fxe5+ ♔xe5 40.♔f2 ♔d6 41.♔e3 ♔e5



White is able to force the king back as the black knight is tied down.

42.c4 ♔d6 If 42...♘c6 43.♗xc6 bxc6 44.b5 cxb5 45.cxb5 axb5 46.a6 wins.

43.c5+ ♔e5 After 43...♔c7 44.♗d5 ♔d7 45.♔f4 ♔e7 46.♔g5 wins.

44.b5 A splendid breakthrough.

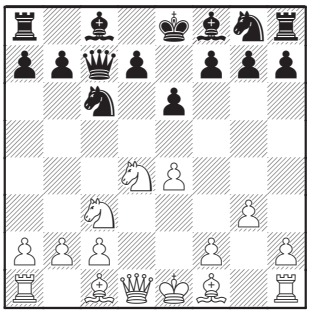
44...axb5 45.♗xb7 If the knight captures the bishop, then a6 queens a pawn.

1-0

Georg **Mohr** – Katarzyna **Toma**

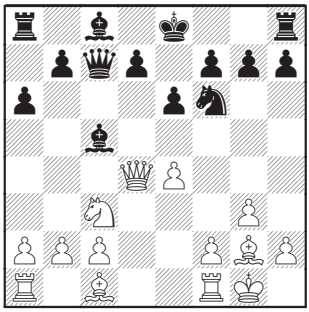
Jersey International 2025
St Clement Bay JCI (3.1)

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘c6 5.♘c3 ♕c7 6.g3



Played by Bobby Fischer; this fianchetto has the aim of hindering Black queenside expansion by ..a6 and ..b5.

6...♘f6 7.♗g2 a6 8.0-0 ♘xd4 9.♕xd4 ♗c5

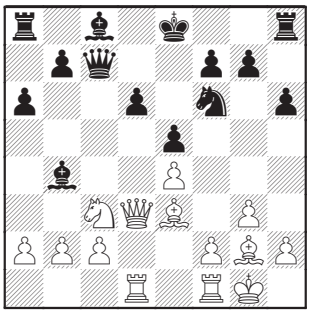


Black attacks the queen, but White has a good reply.

10.♗f4 d6 If 10...♗xd4 11.♗xc7 ♗xc3 12.bxc3 d5 13.exd5 ♘xd5 14.♗e5 f6 15.c4 ♘e7 16.♗d6 ♔f7 17.♖ab1 with strong pressure against b7.

11.♕d3 h6 11...e5 12.♗g5 is not as good.

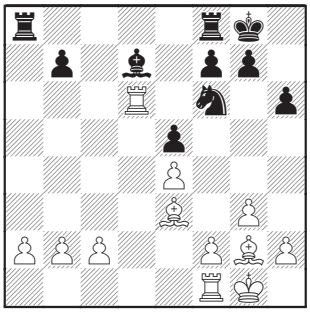
12.♖ad1 e5 13.♗e3 ♗b4



Now White has a tactical reply, so alternatives were better. After 13...0-0 14.♗xc5 dxc5 15.♕d6 ♕xd6 16.♖xd6 ♗e6 17.♖fd1 White is better with control of the d-file; 13...♗e6 is worth consideration.

14.♘b5 axb5 15.♕xb5+ ♗d7 16.♕xb4 0-0 After 16...♖a6 17.f3 0-0 18.♖f2 ♗e6 19.♗f1 ♖xa2 20.♖xd6 ♖xb2 21.♕xb2 ♕xd6 22.♕xb7 White retains an extra pawn.

17.♕xd6 ♕xd6 18.♖xd6

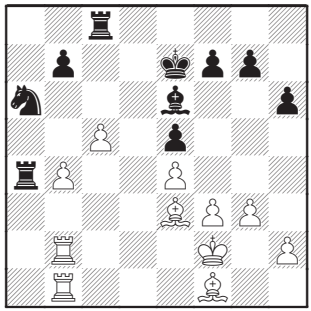


18...♖xa2 19.♖b1 White holds onto the extra pawn.

19...♖c8 20.♖d2 ♗e6 21.f3 ♔f8 22.♗f1 ♔e7 23.♔f2 ♘d7 24.c4 ♘b8 If 24...♗xc4 25.♖c1 wins material.

25.b3 ♖a3 26.c5 ♘a6 After 26...♖xb3 27.♖xb3 ♗xb3 28.♖b2, White stands better; or 26...♗xb3 27.♖db2 ♖a2 28.♖xa2 ♗xa2 29.♖xb7+

27.b4 ♖a4 28.♖db2



28...f6 29.♗b5 ♖a3 30.♖c1 ♘c7 31.♗e2 ♖ca8 32.b5 ♖a2 33.♖cc2 ♖xb2 34.♖xb2 ♗d7 35.♗c4 ♖a4 36.♗d3 ♘e6 37.c6 bxc6 After 37...♗c8 38.b6 ♘d4 39.♗xd4 ♖xd4 [or 39...exd4 40.e5 fxe5 41.♗c6 bxc6 42.♗xc6], White is winning; 40.♗a6 seals the deal.

38.b6 The b-pawn costs Black a piece.

1-0

JERSEYCHESSCLUB
JERSEY INTERNATIONAL 2025
ST CLEMENT BAY JCI SAT 5TH APR 2025 - SAT 12TH APR 2025
LEADING FINAL ROUND 9 STANDINGS

Rk	SNo	Name	FED	Rtg	Pts	TB1
1	1	GM **Rozentalis, Eduardas**	LTU	2481	7.5	2444
2	3	GM **Mohr, Georg**	SLO	2385	7	2420
3	2	IM **O'Gorman, Tom**	IRL	2391	6	2329
4	7	WGM **Toma, Katarzyna**	ENG	2168	5.5	2318
5	6	FM **Kalavannan, Koby**	ENG	2252	5.5	2286
6	4	GM **Arkell, Keith C**	ENG	2333	5	2257
7	10	**Clarke, Connor**	ENG	2051	4.5	2157
8	9	**Franco, Gaston**	ARG	2061	4.5	2139
9	8	CM **Gurner, Jem**	JCI	2068	4.5	2107
10	5	IM **Rudd, Jack**	ENG	2276	4.5	2099
11	12	FM **Waddington, Mike P**	ENG	1981	4.5	2024
12	14	**Brixel, Christof Dr.**	GER	1913	4	2008
13	13	WFM **Mihevc-Mohr, Narcisa**	SLO	1940	3.5	1936
14	11	WFM **Strade, Arita**	GCI	1992	3	1906
15	15	**Waterfield, Mark**	ENG	1913	2.5	1713
16	16	**Flanagan, Keith G**	GCI	1604	1	1271

A LOOK AT SOME OF THE BEST GAMES FROM THE EUROPEAN SENIOR TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

By IM Shaun Taulbut

England fielded very strong teams in these championships and won three titles including the 50+ Women, the event was soon after the World Senior Teams and this led to a reduction in entries.

The England teams were:

England 1: Michael Adams, John Emms, Glenn Flear, Nigel Davies, Stephen Dishman

England 2: Gareme Buckley, Neil Dickenson, Chris Duncan, Philip Crocker, Robert Noyce

England 50+ Women: Susan Lalic, Ingrid Lauterbach, Natasha Regan, Shelia Jackson, Petra Fink-Nunn

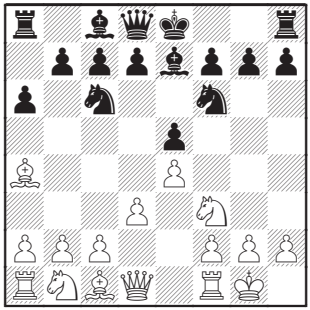
England 65+: John Nunn, Tony Kosten, Jonathan Mestel, Peter Large, Chris Baker Here we'll have a look at some of the most memorable games from the tournament

We start with a smooth positional win from Michael Adams

Michael Adams – Jaroslaw Rogowski

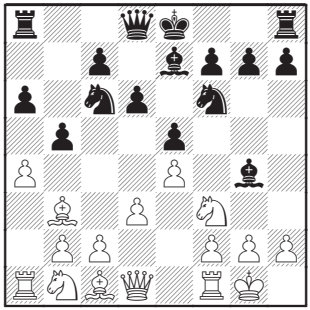
TCh-EUR Senior +50 2025 Swidnica POL (5.13)

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.O–O ♗e7 6.d3



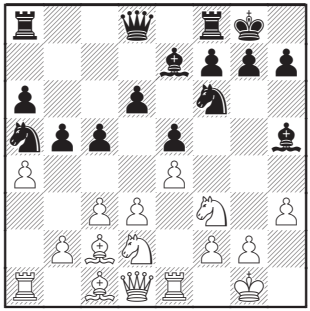
A slow system avoiding the Marshall attack is a useful weapon.

6...b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.a4 ♗g4



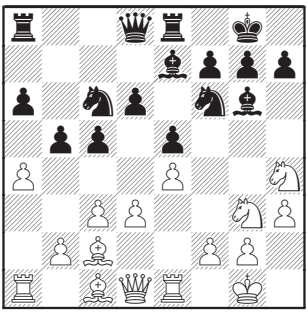
Black develops his queenbishop with the threat of …♘d4 which White can easily counter.

9.c3 O–O 10.♘bd2 ♘a5 11.♗c2 c5 12.h3 ♗h5 13.♖e1



A standard Ruy Lopez plan; White prepares ♘f1 and then has the option of g4 or ♘g3 hounding the Black queenbishop which is a target.

13...♖e8 14.♘f1 ♘c6 15.♘g3 ♗g6 16.♘h4



White aims to post a knight on f5 which will threaten the Black kingbishop.

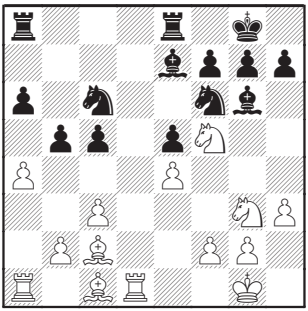
16...d5 Black counters in the centre; Not 16...♘xe4 17.♘xg6 ♘xg3 when 18.♘xe7+ wins.

17.♘hf5 Also good is; 17.♘xg6 hxg6 18.exd5 ♕xd5 19.♘e4.

17...dxe4 Black takes the opportunity to exchange queens but the endgame is not easy as White has an edge.

17...d4 was worth consideration.

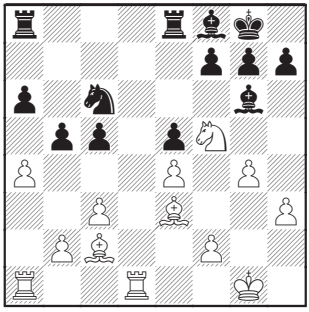
18.dxe4 ♕xd1 19.♖xd1



White has the edge due to the strong knight on f5; Black decides to preserve the kingbishop.

19...♗f8 20.♗g5 Threatening ♗xf6 damaging the Black pawn structure

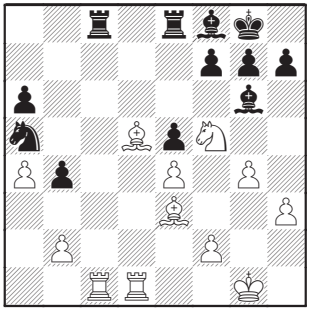
20...♘h5 21.♘xh5 ♗xh5 22.g4 ♗g6 23.♗e3



Black cannot easily challenge the d-file because of White's pressure on b5 and down the a-file.

23...b4 A mistake allowing the White kingbishop into play; better was 23...c4 24.♖d5

24.♗b3 ♘a5 25.♗d5 ♖ac8 26.cxb4 cxb4 27.♖ac1



A quick winning move; White has the threat of Bb6 attacking the trapped knight on a5 and …♖b8 is met by ♗a7 so Black resigned.

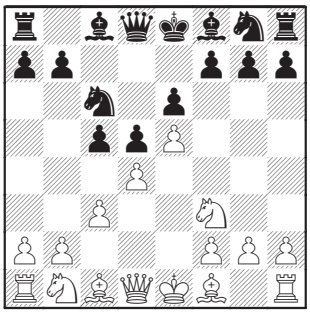
1-0

John Nunn also was in good form.

John **Nunn** – Heikki **Westerinen**

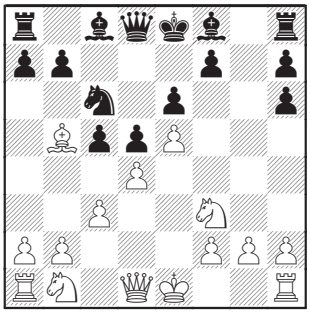
TCh-EUR Senior +65 2025 Swidnica POL (9.5)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 ♘c6 5.♘f3



5...♘h6 5...♘ge7 is a good alternative; White now decides to exchange giving up the dark squared bishop to double Black's pawns.

6.♗xh6 gxh6 7.♗b5

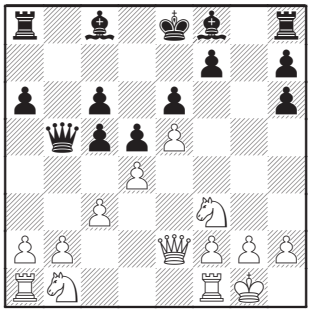


White pins the knight in order to neutralise Black attacking the central pawn chain.

7...♕b6 8.♕e2 a6 9.♗a4 Perhaps best is 9.♗xc6+ ♝bxc6 10.0-0 ♝a5 11.♖c1 ♗a6 12.♕d2 with a small edge for White.

9...♕a5 Black had a good move here after 9...cxd4 10.cxd4 ♕b4+ 11.♘c3 b5 12.a3 ♕c4is almost equal.

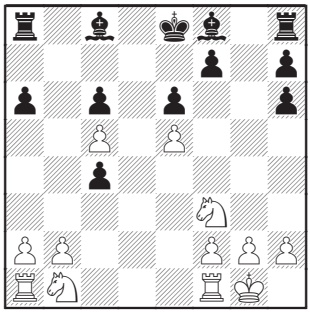
10.♗xc6+ bxc6 11.0-0 ♕b5



Black hopes to exchange queens but White has a fine reply breaking up the black pawn structure further.

12.c4 ♕xc4 After 12...dxc4 13.♘a3 ♕b8 14.dxc5 ♗xc5 15.♘xc4 White is much better.

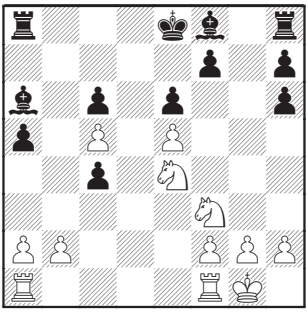
13.♕xc4 dxc4 14.dxc5



Black now has several pawn weaknesses and the White knights have the fine square e4.

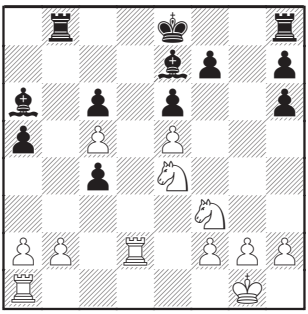
14...a5 After 14...♗xc5 15.♘bd2 ♗e7 16.♘xc4 White has a positional edge.

15.♘bd2 ♗a6 16.♘e4



16...♗e7 16...c3 is well met by 17.♖fd1, and if 17...cxb2 18.♘f6+ ♔e7 19.♖d7# so Black defends against this possibility.

17.♖fd1 ♖b8 18.♖d2 Protecting b2.

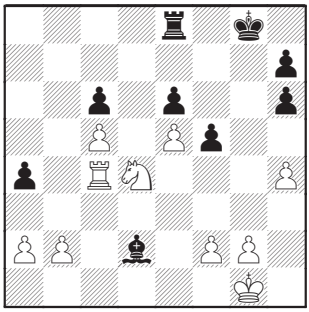


18.0-0 19.♖ad1 f5 20.♘d6 ♗g5 After 20...♗xd6 21.exd6 ♗b5 22.♖e1 ♖fe8 23.♘d4 ♔f7 24.d7 is winning, e.g. 24...♖e7 25.♘xb5.

21.♖c2 ♗b5 22.♖e1 a4 23.h4 ♗d8 24.♘d4 Winning material as Black cannot protect e6 and c6 so he gives up the exchange.

24...♗a5 25.♖ec1 ♖fe8 26.♘♘xe8 ♖xe8 27.♖xc4 Offering the exchange back leaves Black with no defence.

27...♗d2 28.♖xc2 ♗xc4 29.♖xc4



29...♖b8 30.♖c2 ♗f4 31.♘xc6 ♖b7 32.g3 ♖c7 33.gxf4 ♖xc6 34.b4 The connected passed pawns will win the game.

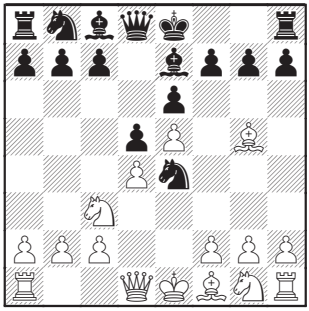
1-0

Now an instructive game by Peter Large featuring a rook sacrifice

Peter Large – Torsten Lange

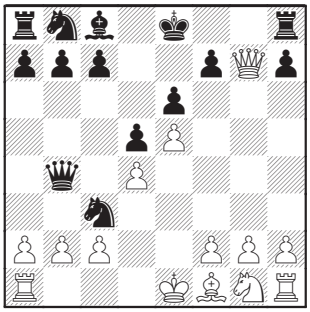
TCh-EUR Senior +65 2025 Swidnica POL (3.16)

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 ♗e7 5.e5 ♘e4



6.♗xe7 ♘xc3 7.♕g4 Also playable was 7.♗xd8 ♘xd1 8.♖xd1 ♔xd8 9.♗d3.

7...♕xe7 8.♕xg7 ♕b4



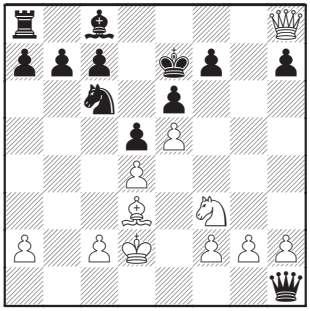
9.♕xh8+ ♔e7 10.♗d3 White chooses a sacrificial line 10.♕f6+ is equal.

10...♕xb2 11.♖d1 After 11.♔d2 ♕xa1 12.♕xc8 ♕d1+ 13.♔xc3 ♕e1+ 14.♔b2 ♕b4+ 15.♔c1 ♕e1+ with a draw by perpetual check.

11...♘c6 After 11...♘xd1 12.♕xc8 ♘c3 13.♘e2 ♕b1+ 14.♔d2 ♕xh1 15.♘xc3 ♕xg2 16.♘e2 ♘c6 17.♕xa8 is winning.

12.♘f3 ♘xd1 13.♔xd1 13.♕f6+ ♔e8 14.♘g5 is also possible.

13...♕a1+ 14.♔d2 ♕xh1

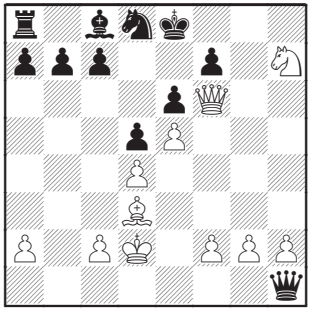


White has sacrificed a whole rook but it is difficult for Black to defend.

15.♕f6+ ♔e8 15...♔d7 is probably best here aiming to bring the knight to e7.

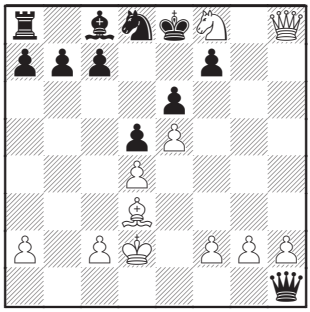
16.♘g5 ♘d8 After 16...♘xd4 17.♕xf7+ ♔d8 18.c3 ♕a1 19.♕g8+ ♔e7 20.cxd4 ♕b2+ 21.♔e3 ♕c1+ 22.♔e2 ♕b2+ 23.♔f3 ♕c3 24.♕xh7+ ♔d8 25.♕g8+ ♔e7 26.♕f7+ ♔d8 27.♕f6+ ♔e8 28.♕g6+ ♔d8 29.g4 White is better.

17.♘xh7



17...♔d7 18.♘f8+ ♔e8 The losing mistake; Essential was 18...♔c6 19.♕xd8 a6 20.♕e8+ ♔b6 21.♕xf7 ♕xh2.

19.♕h8



19...♔e7 After 19...a6 20.♘xe6+ ♔d7 21.♕xd8+ ♔xe6 22.♕e8#.

20.♘h7 a6 20...b6 21.♕f8+ ♔d7 22.♗b5+ c6 23.♕d6+ ♔e8 24.♘f6#.

21.♕f8+ White will checkmate on c5 with the queen after 21...♔d7 22.♘f6+ ♔c6.

1-0

TCH-EUR SENIOR +50 2025 SWIDNICA POL SAT 5TH APR 2025 - FRI 11TH APR 2025
LEADING FINAL ROUND 9 STANDINGS:

Rk	SNo	Team	Gms	+	-	=	TB1	TB2	TB3
1	1	**ENG - England 50+ 1**	9	8	0	1	1	17	243.5
2	2	**GER - Germany**	9	6	2	1	2	13	230
3	3	**ENG - England 50+ 2**	9	6	3	0	3	12	147.5
4	7	**WLS - Wales Silures O50**	9	3	5	1	4	7	112.5
5	8	**POL - Swidnica**	9	2	4	3	5	7	108
6	6	**POL - Caissa Poland**	9	3	5	1	6	7	83.5
7	4	**ENG - England 50+ Women**	9	3	4	2	7	8	65.5
8	5	**POL - UKS Giecek Radków**	9	0	8	1	8	1	84.5

TCH-EUR SENIOR +65 2025 SWIDNICA POL SAT 5TH APR 2025 - FRI 11TH APR 2025
LEADING FINAL ROUND 9 STANDINGS:

Rk	Team	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TB1	TB2	TB3
1	**ENG - England 65+ 1**	*	3	3½	3	3	3½	3	3	4	16	176.5	26
2	**POL - Lower Silesia Team**	1	*	3	½	2½	3	2½	2½	4	12	114.5	19
3	**GER - Saxony Team**	½	1	*	2½	2½	3	2	3½	4	11	106	19
4	**BEL - Belgium KBSB**	1	3½	1½	*	2	2½	3	2	4	10	128.5	19.5
5	**GER - SK Zaehringen Reloaded**	1	1½	1½	2	*	2½	2½	2½	4	9	105.5	17.5
6	**ENG - England 65+ 2**	½	1	1	1½	1½	*	2½	2½	4	6	79.5	14.5
7	**GER - SV Osnabrück**	1	1½	2	1	1½	1½	*	3	4	5	97.5	15.5
8	**FIN - Finland**	1	1½	½	2	1½	1½	1	*	3½	3	87	12.5
9	**CRO - Šahovski klub MURSKO SREDIŠĆE**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	*	0	1.5	0.5

THE 69TH WELSH CHAMPIONSHIP

CAMACHO COLLADOS TRIUMPHS IN CARDIFF AS TACTICS TELL

By IM Shaun Taulbut

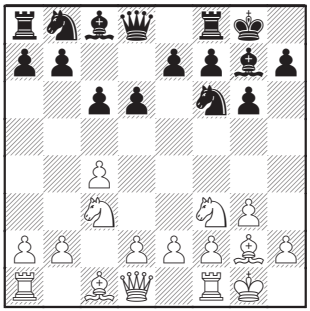
The 69th Welsh Championship was held in Cardiff in April. The winner was Jose Camacho Collados, a professor at Cardiff University. The record holder for the Welsh Championship is A H Williams who won the championship eighteen times.

The following game featured some sharp tactics and required accurate calculation by the winner.

Camacho Collados,J – Jonathan Blackburn

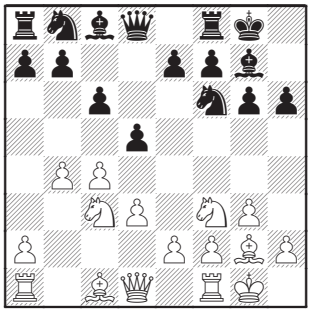
69th ch-WLS 2025 Cardiff WLS (5.1)

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 ♗g7 4.♗g2 0-0 5.0-0 d6 6.♘c3 c6



White now chooses to play slowly in the centre rather than the natural 7.d4

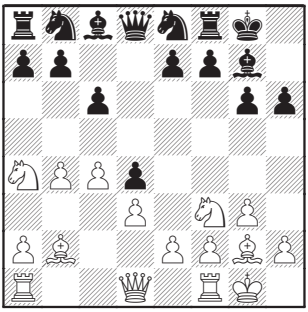
7.d3 h6 8.b4 d5



Black counters the flank attack with a central pawn thrust which is sensible; not 8...♘e4 9.dxe4 ♗xc3 10.♗xh6 when White is much better.

9.♗b2 d4 This pawn advance is committal; the alternative was the exchange 9...dxc4 10.dxc4 ♕xd1 11.♖fxd1 ♗e6 12.♘d2 ♘bd7 13.b5 ♖ac8 14.bxc6 bxc6 15.♖ac1 with a slight edge for White

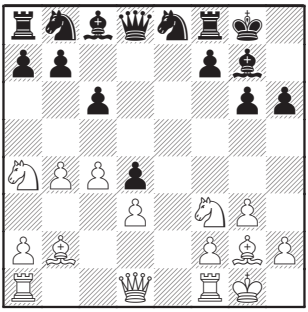
10.♘a4 ♘e8



White now is able to play against the Black centre pawn due to his superior development

11.e3 e5 After 11...dxe3 12.fxe3 ♗g4 13.♗xg7 ♘xg7 14.♕d2 ♗xf3 15.♗xf3 ♘d7 16.d4 White has the edge but Black has good chances for equality. Also possible is 11...♗g4 12.♗xd4 ♗xf3 13.♕xf3 ♗xd4 14.exd4 ♕xd4 with a slight edge for White.

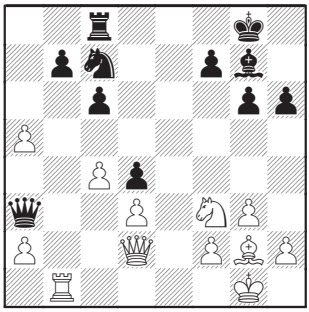
12.exd4 exd4



13.♖e1 ♘c7 14.♘c5 a5 15.bxa5 ♘d7 16.♗a3 Also playable is 16.♘b3 c5 17.♗h3 with an edge for White.

16...♖e8 Worth consideration is the exchange sacrifice 16...♖xa5 17.♘xd7 ♖xa3 18.♘xf8 ♕xf8 when 19.♕b1 is slightly better for White but it is difficult to break into the Black position.

17.♖xe8+ ♕xe8 18.♕d2 ♕f8 19.♘xd7 ♕xa3 20.♘b6 ♖b8 21.♘xc8 ♖xc8 22.♖b1



22...♘e6 After 22...♖b8 23.♖b3 ♕e7 24.♕e1 ♕xe1+ 25.♘xe1 White has the edge.

23.♖xb7 ♘c5 24.♖b6 ♘xd3 If 24...♕xd3 25.♕xd3 ♘xd3 26.♘d2 White is much better.

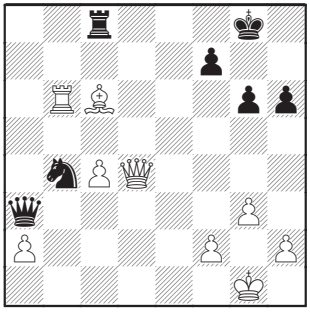
25.a6 ♘c5 Critical was the following line 25...♖a8 26.♖b3 ♕c1+ 27.♕xc1 ♘xc1 28.♖b6 d3 29.♘d2 ♗c3 30.♖xc6 ♗xd2 31.♖xg6+ fxg6 32.♗xa8 ♗c3 33.♗d5+ ♔g7 34.a7 d2 35.♗f3 when White is able to stop the Black d-pawn from queening whilst his own a-pawn does queen.

26.♘xd4 This strong move is calculated accurately and hard to foresee.

26...♗xd4 After 26...♖d8 27.♘c2 ♖xd2 28.♘xa3 ♖xa2 29.a7 ♖a1+ 30.♗f1 ♖xa3 31.♖b8+ ♔h7 32.a8♕ is winning for White.

27.♕xd4 ♘xa6 After 27...♕a5 28.♕g4 ♘e6 29.c5 ♕xc5 30.♖b7 is strong.

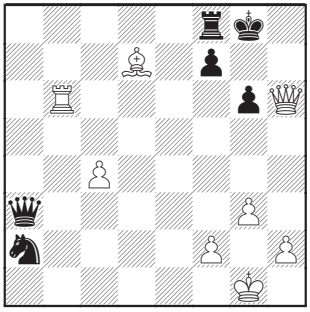
28.♗xc6 ♘b4



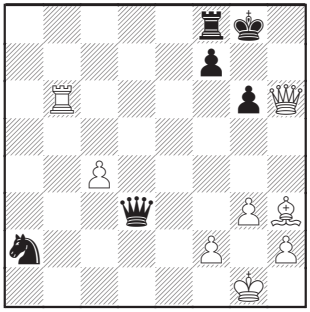
After 28...♕c5 29.♕xc5 ♘xc5 30.a4 White is winning.

29.♗d7 29.♗e4 is strong with the threat of ♗xg6 as is 29.♕d7 ♖f8 30.♗e4 ♕c1+ 31.♔g2 ♕xc4 32.♕b7 ♘xa2 33.♖xg6+ fxg6 34.♗d5+ winning.

29...♖f8 30.♕d2 ♘xa2 31.♕xh6



31...♕d3 32.♗h3



Also possible is 32.♗g4 ♘c3 33.♕f4.

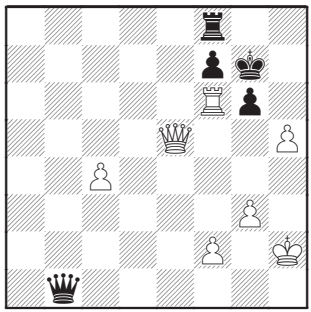
32...♘c3 After 32...♕d4 White is still much better; Not 32...♕xc4 33.♖xg6+ fxg6 34.♕xg6+ ♔h8 35.♕h6+ ♔g8 36.♗e6+ winning.

33.♗f1 ♘e2+ After 33...♕d4 34.♖b7 ♘d1 35.♕f4 ♕xf4 36.gxf4 ♘c3 37.f5 gxf5 38.♖b3 ♘e4 39.♖f3 White is much better though this is the best line for Black.

34.♗xe2 ♕xe2 35.♕f4 ♔h7 35...♖c8 36.♖b8 ♖xb8 37.♕xb8+ ♔g7 38.♕f4.

36.h4 ♕d1+ 37.♔h2 ♕c2 38.♖f6 ♔g7 39.h5 Opening up the kingside is decisive; Black cannot capture on h5 because of ♕g5+ followed by ♖h6+.

39...♕b1 40.♕e5



If the black king moves away from the discovered check threat, 41.hxg6 wins.

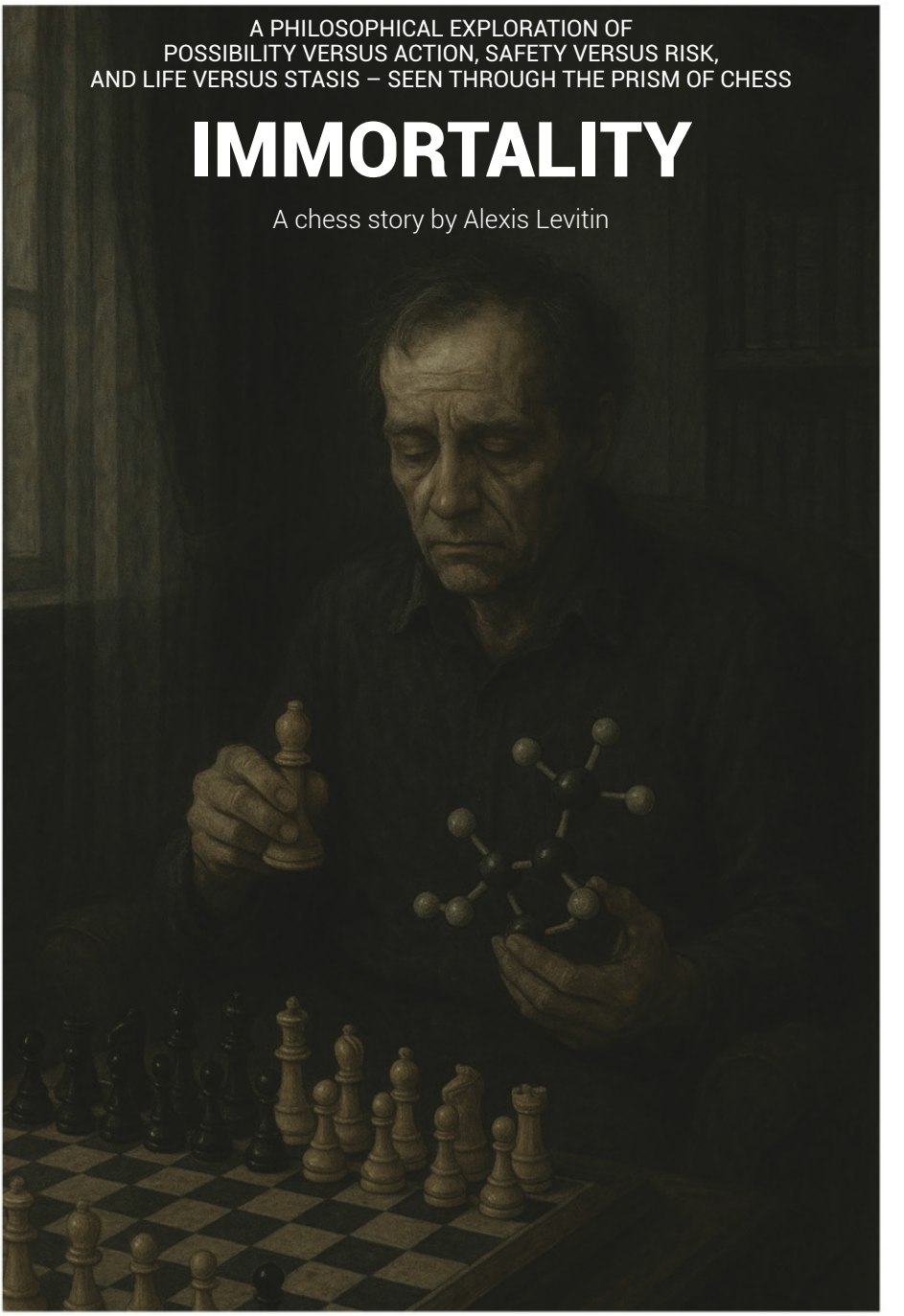
1-0

9TH CH-WLS 2025 CARDIFF WLS FRI 18TH APR 2025 - MON 21ST APR 2025 LEADING FINAL ROUND 7 STANDINGS								
Rk	SNo	Name	FED	Rtg	Pts	TB1	TB2	TB3
1	1	**Camacho Collados, Jose**	WLS	2316	6.5	0	6	31.5
2	7	**Cave, Iwan**	WLS	2056	6	0	5	30.5
3	2	**Toczek, Grzegorz**	WLS	2233	5	0	5	29.5
4	4	**Blackburn, Jonathan L B**	WLS	2205	4.5	0.5	3	30
5	5	**Bullen, Alex**	WLS	2160	4.5	0.5	3	28.5
6	6	**Kett, Tim**	WLS	2089	4	0	4	27.5
7	8	**Freeland, Alex**	WLS	2018	4	0	3	27
8	14	**Fathallah, Joe**	WLS	1979	4	0	3	27
9	9	**Szakmany, Bence**	WLS	2017	4	0	3	25
10	15	**Jukes, Sam**	WLS	1951	4	0	3	23
11	3	**Harakis, Alexis M**	WLS	2224	3.5	0	3	27.5
12	26	**Korovski, Georgi**	WLS	1697	3.5	0	3	22
13	11	**Spice, Alan**	WLS	1999	3.5	0	3	21.5
14	18	**Davis, Lee**	WLS	1905	3.5	0	2	23.5
15	12	**Young, Alan**	WLS	1991	3.5	0	2	23
16	17	**Binks, Michael**	WLS	1937	3.5	0	2	22
17	13	**Pleasants, Allan J**	WLS	1985	3.5	0	1	24.5
18	22	**Kong, Emma Zihan**	WLS	1818	3.5	0	1	24
19	16	**Van Kemenade, Rudy**	WLS	1945	3	0	3	22
20	25	**Mckenna, Joshua**	WLS	1705	3	0	3	16.5
21	19	**Mcgregor, John**	WLS	1868	3	0	1	23.5
22	10	**Musson, Adam J**	WLS	2012	2.5	0	2	23
23	27	**Beeston, Darson**	WLS	1692	2.5	0	2	22
24	21	**Turner, Joseph David**	WLS	1819	2.5	0	1	24
25	23	**Tuson, Jon**	WLS	1806	2	0	2	23
26	24	**Shevchenko, Danylo**	WLS	1757	2	0	2	20.5
27	20	**Thomas, Roy**	WLS	1855	2	0	2	20

A PHILOSOPHICAL EXPLORATION OF
POSSIBILITY VERSUS ACTION, SAFETY VERSUS RISK,
AND LIFE VERSUS STASIS – SEEN THROUGH THE PRISM OF CHESS

IMMORTALITY

A chess story by Alexis Levitin



Ethan loved the feel of the polished pieces in his hand. The solid weight of the ebony knight. The more delicate feel of the boxwood bishop, nestled in the curve of his fingers, as if happily protected from the world. The black and the white. Solid, self-confident, sure of their role in the world. And always silent, simply waiting to be put in play. Two creatures from a world of perfection. He looked at the pieces aligned on the two sides of the board and sighed with a sense of deep satisfaction. All was in order in the best of all possible worlds.

And even more beautiful perhaps than the perfect balance of the aligned forces were the possibilities awaiting all of them. For in fact, until a game began, anything was possible. The future that awaits in a chess game contains more possibilities than the universe contains atoms, as Claude Shannon had proven to the delight of chess aficionados. For all practical purposes, the possibilities inherent in the future for any game of chess about to begin were infinite. Ah, how he loved to contemplate those endless possibilities.

Ethan lived alone in the sturdy if somber house he had inherited when his father, always a distant figure in his life, had died, quite suddenly, years ago. Along with the house, he had also inherited the chess set. His father had bought it abroad during one of his many business trips. Brazil? India? Thailand? Morocco? Ethan had no idea. But strangely enough, his father, though he loved the elegance of the pieces and the board, had never found the time to play. For him, the chess set was part of the beauty of the house, like the dark mahogany banister on the curving stairs, like the quietly intricate carpet from Isfahan in the middle of the sunken living room. It was a stately impressive decoration, that's all.

Ethan had played, of course, in childhood, but always at school, never at home. Sometimes he won, sometimes he lost, but by the time he finished high school he was less and less inclined to engage in actual games. He always felt frustrated by a real game, even if he won, frustrated by the realization that with a bit more thought he might have found a better line of play, a better tactic, a more fruitful continuation. He felt that any choice in reality was less strong, less elegant, less convincing than what might have occurred otherwise. And so he dropped out of the chess club and stopped playing chess.

The years passed. He moved to Boston, drifted into a solid, if uninteresting, position at a brokerage firm, ate most of his meals at a Chinese restaurant near his house, then would go home, watch TV, and go to sleep. He continued to live alone (even in college he had not had a roommate). He had been quite impressed (or perhaps depressed) by a truth garnered from John Barth's *End of the Road*, something to the effect that the sum total of all possible women in the world was always greater than any one woman could be. And so, quite logically, he had never married. And as he drifted into early middle age, he even stopped going out on dates. What, after all, would be the point? No single girl, no single woman, could possibly equal all the possible women in the world. So he hunkered down and without complaint lived his life alone.

When Ethan was 33, his father suddenly died, so he moved back into what might be considered his ancestral home. He was comfortable there and couldn't imagine ever leaving. He lived alone, but the dimensions of the house did not trouble him. He used his bedroom for sleeping, the kitchen for cooking and eating, and a somber study for reading. Despite the many books in the study, much of his spare time (all of his time was spare) he spent in the simple contemplation of that elegant chess set he had inherited along with the house. His father's death had left him, as well, with a small, but adequate income, so there was no need to continue to go each day to the brokerage firm. He severed his connection, they gave him a good-bye party, a few slaps on the back, and that was that.

Although he continued to read, he was never sure why he did so. Anticipation as he opened a new book always proved richer than the satisfaction when he finished. And so he began to spend more and more of his time seated before the elegant chess set in silent contemplation. He would sip, now and then, from a delicate glass of peach nectar, while his mind wandered along forking pathways in the pastures of the future, in the fields of the Lord. There were pinned knights to worry about, but also there was the almost bewildering potential of two knights, unpinned and in mid-board, reaching out feelers in all directions, like an octopus. And then, of course, there were the efforts of the castles to align with each other in a penetrating attack. There was, as well, the always surprising power of two bishops side by side, a clear example of how one plus one can be more than two. And then, of course, not to be forgotten, there were always the humble, but potentially very important movements of his pawns, each bearing a hopeful seed, each capable of a brilliant metamorphosis from servility to royalty. The pawns, he realized, as time passed, fascinated him more than anything else. They were the only figures, the only beings, who were subject to irreversibility. Once advanced, a pawn could never go back. In that sense the pawns were the most realistic entities on the board. Like a human being, once a pawn had taken a step forward, there was no returning. Therefore, Ethan had a special tenderness for the pawns in their almost human vulnerability The more he thought about it, the more convinced he became that the best ploy for all the quiet pawns on the board would be to not move them at all. Better safe than sorry. And so the pawns stayed nestled in their initial positions, full of potential, if not of motion, like larvae lying quietly in their cocoons, waiting for the miracle to occur.

It wasn't long before he realized that his solicitude for the pawns was spreading to the other pieces. Why risk a knight, why risk a bishop? Who knows what might happen to a rook out there in the middle of the board. And his precious, elegant queen, how could she possibly enter the battlefield, where she would be liable to attacks from all sides. Yes, he decided, with a sigh of resignation, but also a strange contentment, it was better for the knights, the bishops, the rooks and especially the lovely queen, to stay at home, safe and sound. Not only would they all be sheltered, but from there they could all look forward, with the tingle of anticipation, to an endless variety of possibilities in an endless future.

And so, Ethan spent his days, his weeks, his months, and his years contemplating, with a half-hidden sly smile on his face, the infinite possibilities of his elegant chess pieces, the white and the black, the boxwood and the ebony. And he would occasionally sip from his cool glass of peach nectar. You might be asking yourself what happened next. But, in fact nothing happened next. Nothing ever happened. And Ethan, you might be surprised to hear, never seemed to grow old, never got cancer, and never died. He simply went on sitting before the solid ebony and boxwood pieces day after day with a half-smile on his face, as if he had made a great discovery, found a solution to the mystery of life. And in fact, perhaps he had found the perfect solution to both chess and life itself. Certainly he had discovered how never to lose. Not a pawn, not a knight, not a bishop, not a rook, not a queen. He had discovered immortality. Eternal life.

For, after all, how can you fail if you have never taken a single step? How can you die, if you have never begun to live?

Alexis Levitin is an award-winning literary translator of 48 books, specialising in poetry from Portugal, Brazil, and Ecuador. He is also a chess fan and has published stories about chess, including in the American Chess Magazine and BCM.

How Do You Evaluate a Position?

By GM Aleksandar Colovic
www.alexcolovic.com

Most of the times evaluating a position is not that difficult. The position can be familiar as it comes from an opening we know or have analysed, it can be a known theoretically winning endgame, it can be visually clear what is happening and so on.

But what happens when something like this occurs on the board?

How do you evaluate a position like this one? (Taken from the online rapid game Shirov-Grigoryan from 2020.)

I can only assume what the others do, but I don't think it's very different from what I would do, especially as there's little else one can do!

After admitting to yourself that you have absolutely no clue what is happening here, the next step is simply to calculate. That's incredibly difficult too, with many options for both sides on each move. But the point of calculation is to give you one important understanding about the position, unless you have already figured it out. That is the understanding of which side has easier play.

In this position it is undoubtedly Black. His play is simple and it consists of pushing the pawn(s). What White should do is not clear at all.

This understanding of "easiness" is very important because it implies which side should undertake more urgent measures. In this case it's White - if he doesn't do something urgent Black will simply queen his pawn(s), sooner or later.

Once this understanding has been reached, then calculation becomes (a little bit) easier, as White will be seeking moves in the direction of creating something, while Black would seek to calm the position down and push his pawn(s).

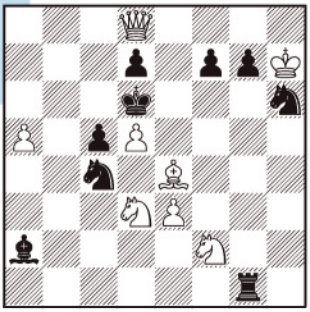
This doesn't take away the hard work of "I go here, he goes there" but at least gives some direction. As for the actual evaluation of the position above, the latest version of Stockfish at the time of writing evaluates it at depth 48 to be, surprise, surprise, 0.00.

PROBLEM WORLD

by Christopher Jones
cjajones1@yahoo.co.uk
Grandmaster of Chess Composition

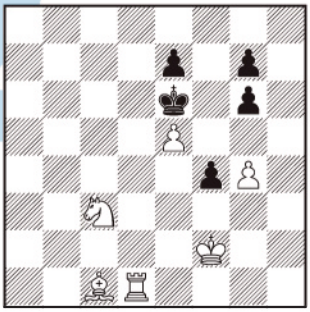
Solutions are given on page 382

1



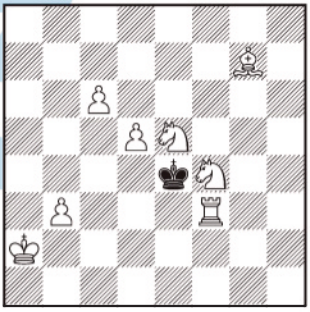
Leonid Makaronez (Israel)
Mate in 3
ORIGINAL

2



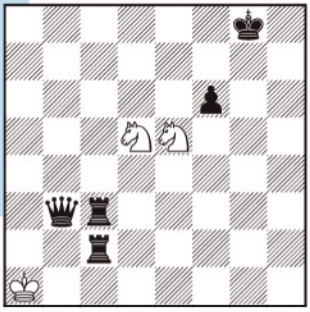
Paul Michelet (London)
Mate in 3
ORIGINAL

3



Abdelaziz Onkoud (France)
Helpmate in 2 - 2 solutions
ORIGINAL

4



Ljubomir Ugren (Slovenia)
Helpmate in 6
ORIGINAL

A CENTURY ON:
VERA MENCHIK'S 1925 VICTORY IN HASTINGS OVER EDITH CHARLOTTE PRICE

On June 11, 1925, Vera Menchik, representing Russia, defeated British chess champion Edith Charlotte Price in an informal match in Hastings, securing a 3-2 victory. This triumph mirrored her earlier success against Edith Charlotte Price at Easter, solidifying Menchik's standing as a formidable player in women's chess.

The Times published a detailed report from the match that highlighted Menchik's "sounder game". Despite her victory, some observers still considered Edith Charlotte Price "quite as fine a natural player", though noting her weaker understanding "in her knowledge of the openings".

ENGLISH CHAMPION DEFEATED BY RUSSIA.

(FROM OUR CHESS CORRESPONDENT.)

HASTINGS, JUNE 11.

The second informal match between Miss Price (British champion) and Miss Menchik ended in a victory for the Russian girl by three games to two, the same margin as in the first match at Easter. All the games in this last match were very hardly fought, Miss Menchik playing, on the whole, a sounder game, but even now I do not consider her quite as fine a natural player as Miss Price, but the latter is weaker in her knowledge of the openings.

The article from The Times, 11 June 1925

This series of victories against Edith Charlotte Price was a crucial precursor to Menchik's ascent in the global chess arena. Her established dominance in Britain laid the groundwork for her eventual win at the inaugural Women's World Chess Championship in 1927.

The Hastings match saw Edith Charlotte Price, playing with the white pieces, face the French Defence, demonstrating "considerable ingenuity" to win the exchange in a keenly fought battle that spanned 47 moves. The second game, a Queen's Pawn opening, saw Menchik gain an early advantage that translated into a material gain, concluding the game in 59 moves. Price played the French Defence in the third game, but faltered by "somewhat neglecting development in the early stages," eventually losing two pawns. Despite a chance for a perpetual check draw, Price missed the right continuation, allowing Menchik to secure the win in a protracted 64-move contest. The fourth game, another Queen's Pawn opening, saw Price respond with the Benoni Counter Gambit, leading to a "very close position". A kingside attack by Price was not optimally met, and the combined strength of Menchik's queen, rook, and two advanced pawns rendered Black's position "untenable", leading to a loss in 47 moves. The Times noted a crucial misstep by Price in the fifth game, where she "purposely played an irregular variation" against Menchik's preferred Sicilian Defence, failing to address a central passed pawn which ultimately led to a mating combination.

The centenary since this match took place marks one of the key moments in Vera Menchik's great career, cut short by tragedy.

The informal nature of the chess matches of that time and the almost casual way in which they were organised and presented lies in stark contrast to chess matches of today. Still, with more recognition of (women's) chess, came more structure and more regulations, which helped elevate the game to where it is today. But at the heart of it all were Menchik's constant victories over leading women players and strong results against male players of the time, demonstrating the rising standard of play among women, giving women's chess more prominence and respect.

BCM Staff

QUOTES AND QUERIES

RYDER'S GAMBIT AND THE RISE OF KATE FINN

By Alan Smith

In this instalment of Quotes and Queries column, we've gathered a fresh selection of forgotten brilliancies, curious repetitions, and historical oddities from the margins of chess history.

From a Sanskrit scholar's bold gambit in Leipzig to the quiet dominance of Britain's first women's champion, these fragments remind us that the game's past is far richer than just the exploits of world champions.

Whether it's a duplicated miniature, a dubious opening salvaged by flair, or a cleric outplaying Zukertort, each entry offers a glimpse into chess's long and often overlooked hinterland.

6289 Arthur William Ryder (1877- 1938) has two claims to fame. He was Professor of Sanskrit at the University of California and author of English translations of *The Bhagavad -Gita*. He was also a chess player of some distinction. He represented Harvard twice in the intercollegiate team event. Harvard won both times.

He should also be remembered as the inventor of the Ryder Gambit 1.d4 d5 2.e4 dxe4 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.f3 exf3 5.♕xf3. The following game was played while he was studying in Germany and is the stem game of the gambit.

Arthur William Ryder - von Holzhausen

Leipzig, 1899

1.d4 d5 2.e4 dxe4 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.f3 exf3 5.♕xf3 5.♘xf3 is the Blackmar Diemer Gambit.

5...♕xd4 Black can safely take this pawn. Half a century later Diemer - Bogoljubow varied with 5...g6 6.♗d3 ♗g7 7.♘ge2 0-0 8.♗f4 ♘c6 9.0-0-0 ♗g4 10.♕f2 ♘b4, but white can improve with 6.♗c4

6.♗e3 ♕g4 7.♕f2 ♕b4? This looks tempting, but black's queen on g4 is holding up white's castling. MCO 9 points out a stronger try, 7...e5 8.♘f3 ♗b4. **8.0–0–0 ♘g4** According to plan.

9.♘d5! This is the trick that goes a long way to refuting blacks play.

9...♕a5 9...♕d6 was better.

10.♗b5+ c6 10...♗d7 is refuted by 11.♕f5!

11.♗b6 ♘a6 chessgames website gives a game Ryder - Amateur which varied 11...♗d7 12.♕ f5 1-0 **12.♕c5** 12.♕d4! is also strong.

12...♕xb6 13.♗xa6 e5 13...cxd5 keeps black in the game, even though white regains his piece with 14.♗b5+ ♗d7 15.♗xd7+ ♔xd7 16.♕xd5+ ♔c7 17.♕c4+ ♔b8 18.♕xg4.

14.♕xb6 axb6 15.♘c7+ ♔e7 16.♘xa8 ♘f2 17.♘xb6 ♗g4 18.♗e2 ♘xh1 19.♗xg4 ♘f2 20.♖d7+ 20...♔e8 is met by 21.♗e2 when 21...♗c5 22.♖xb7 is decisive.

1–0

Boston Sunday Post, 16th March 1902

6290 Games which duplicate previous games are not unusual. Here is another to add to the list. First the original.

Oskar **Cordel** - H. **Block**

Berlin, 1887

1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.♘f3 g5 4.h4 g4 5.♘e5 ♗g7 6.d4 ♘f6 7.♗c4 d5 8.exd5 0-0 9.♗xf4 ♘xd5 10.♗xd5 John Shaw is not a fan of this capture.

10...♕xd5 11.0-0 ♘c6 12.♘c3 ♕xd4+ 13.♕xd4 ♘xd4 14.♖ad1 ♘xc2? 14...♘e6 15.♗g3 f5 is the correct defence.

15.♘d5 c6 16.♘e7+ ♔h8 18.♘xf7+! ♖xf7 18.♖d8+ ♖f8 19.♖xf8+ ♗xf8 20.♗e5+ ♗g7 21.♖f8#

Brookyn Chess Chronicle, March 1887, p93

This was repeated, move for move, at the Cafe Kerkau in Berlin in 1918, a game Kurt Schirm - Goldschmidt, which was published in *Het vaderland* 19th October 1918

6291 The Rice Gambit has had a bad press, deservedly so. Almost all the games published were played in thematic opening events, where the moves 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.♘f3 g5 4.h4 g4 5.♘e5 ♘f6 6.♗c4 d5 7.exd5 ♗d6 8.0-0?! ♗xe5 were compulsory. There were two notable exceptions Alapin - Burn Barmen 1905 and Lasker - Raubitschek Trenton Falls 1906. Both games were played in the last round of these events and both were drawn.

6292 The first British Ladies champion was Kate Belinda Finn (1864-1932) who scored +10=1 at Hastings 1904 to win by a margin of three points. She was first again at Southport the following year scoring +7=3, plus a win by default. She did not compete at any further BCF congresses but played in two international events. Kate Finn was first equal at the Ostend Ladies event of 1907 and clear first at San Remo 1911, winning all seven games. Here is her win from the opening round, against the player who finished second, a point behind her. Black defended well before losing the thread.

Kate Belinda **Finn** - Helena **Cotton**

San Remo Ladies, 1911

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 ♗e7 5.e3 ♘e4 6.♗xe7 ♕xe7 7.cxd5 ♘xc3 8.bxc3 exd5 9.♕b3 c6 10.♖b1 ♗f5 11.♖b2 b6 12.♘f3 ♘d7 13.♕a4 b5 14.♕a6 ♘b6 15.♘e5 ♗c8 16.♕a5 ♗b7 17.♗d3 0-0 18.0-0 f6 19.♘f3 ♗c8 20.♖e1 ♕f7 21.♕b4 ♗g4 22.♘d2 a5 23.♕d6 ♕d7 24.♕g3 ♗f5 25.♗xf5 ♕xf5 26.e4 dxe4 26...♕e6 is a better try.

27.♘xe4 ♖ae8 28.♖be2 ♖e6 29.h3 ♕d5 30.♘c5! ♖xe2 31.♖xe2 ♕g5 31...g6 was a try.

32.♕c7 ♘d5 33.♕xc6 This is an important defensive move.

33...♘f4? This leads nowhere, 33...♘xc3! and then if 34.♖c2 b4 35.♘e6 black can hold with 35...♕g6.

34.♖e3 ♘xh3+?? 34...♕b1+ 35.♔h2 ♕xa2 was more testing.

35.♖xh3 ♕c1+ 36.♔h2 ♕f4+ 37.g3 ♕xf2+ 38.♕g2 ♕e3 39.♕c2 g6 40.♖h4 ♖e8 41.♖e4 ♕h6+ 42.♔g2 ♖xe4 43.♘xe4...

1–0

Cork Weekly News, 15th April 1911

6293 Most sources do not identify the player who finished last at Cologne 1877, the *Deutsche Schachzeitung* sought to spare his blushes, however the *Illustrirte Zeitung* 15th September 1877 gave a crosstable and identified John de Soyres, of London. Zukertort won first prize with +3=1-1.

6294 Rev John de Soyres (1847-1905) was a capable player whose best result was defeating Zukertort in a single game on level terms in

Kate Belinda Finn; *Source: wikipedia.org*

1874. He was involved in a four-way tie for first place at Boston 1880 and recorded match wins against Rev Wayte and James Minchin. He was responsible for founding the Cambridge University Chess Club. The next game illustrates his prowess with the Evans Gambit.

John de **Soyres** - Edwyn **Anthony**

London, 1872

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗c4 ♗c5 4.b4 ♗xb4 5.c3 ♗c5 6.0-0 d6 7.d4 exd4 8.cxd4 ♗b6 9.d5 ♘a5 10.♗b2 ♘e7 11.♗d3 0-0 12.♘c3 ♘g6 13.♘e2 c6 13...c5 was more popular.

14.♕d2 f6 15.♔h1 cxd5? This opens a key diagonal for White.

16.exd5 ♗g4 17.♘g3 ♘e5 18.♘xe5 fxe5 19.f4 ♗d4 20.fxe5 ♖xf1+ 21.♖xf1 dxe5 22.♗xd4 exd4 23.♕f4 ♗d7 24.♕xd4 Staunton suggested 24.♕e4 g6 25.♘h5.

24...♕g5 25.♕e4 ♕h6 26.♕f3 ♕d6 27.♕f7+ ♔h8 28.♘h5 ♖g8 29.♗xh7! 29...♔xh7 30.♘f6+ ♕xf6 31.♖xf6.

1–0

Illustrated London News, 25th May 1872

John de Soyres was also a published author, he edited *Pascal's Provincial letters*, which was printed in January 1881.

Grandmaster Vlastimil Hort (12 January 1944 – 12 May 2025):

A LIFE BEYOND THE 64 SQUARES

By Vladan Dinic

The chess world has lost four luminaries in the first half of 2025, among them Vlastimil Hort, who passed away on May 12, 2025, at the age of 81. Hort's death followed those of Robert Hübner, Boris Spassky, and Fridrik Ólafsson earlier in the year.

Hort, born on January 12, 1944, was a towering figure in the game, a sentiment echoed by his long-time rival and friend, Grandmaster Ljubomir Ljubojević with whom I was sitting in a café in Belgrade, when the sad news reached us. Their competitive history spanned over half a century, with Ljubojević recalling "maybe even more" than 22 classical games played between them, a record showing five wins for Ljubojević, two for Hort, and 15 draws.

Reflecting on Hort's playing style, Ljubojević dispelled any notions of the Czechoslovak GM being a "peaceful" player, as some suggested. "Vlastimil only seemed peaceful, but he was always lurking, ready to pounce. He looked like a positional player, but could spot a tactic instantly. If you weren't careful, he would mow you down," Ljubo said.

One of Hort's most notable early appearances was in the historic USSR vs. Rest of the World match in Belgrade in 1970. Playing board four for the Rest of the World team, behind chess titans Larsen, Fischer, and Portisch, Hort secured a mini-match victory against Lev Polugaevsky with a score of 2,5-1,5. Hort himself, speaking excellent Serbian at the time, described captain Euwe's team selection as "solid," though he humorously noted Euwe's "naivety" in announcing the lineup before the Soviets, allowing them to adjust theirs. He dismissed speculation that he was placed too high on the team, drawing an analogy to personal preferences, and firmly rejected rumours of Bobby Fischer fearing Boris Spassky, attributing Fischer's board two placement to a "practical decision".

Beyond the chessboard, Hort was known for his amiable nature and engaging personality. He frequently interacted with the audience and even chatted with Soviet players, highlighting the camaraderie that often transcended national rivalries, noting that "Gens una sumus" (We are one family). His impression of Bobby Fischer was contrary to popular belief; he found Fischer "not unstable at all—he came across as completely normal" (as told to me in an interview for *Večernje novosti (The Evening times)*, the leading daily in former Yugoslavia).

Another memorable story worth mentioning is tied to the Bugojno tournament in 1978, where he competed against the likes of Karpov, Spassky, and Tal. Despite losses to Karpov and Spassky, Hort secured victories against

A STELLAR CAREER

Hort was a five-time Czechoslovak champion (1970, 1971, 1972, 1975, and 1977).

He moved to West Germany in 1985 and went on to win the national championship in 1987, 1989, and 1991.

Hort represented Czechoslovakia and later Germany in a total of 14 Chess Olympiads: for Czechoslovakia in 1960, 1962, 1964, 1966, 1968, 1970, 1972, 1974, 1980, 1982, and 1984, and for Germany in 1988, 1990, and 1992.

Hort (right) playing against Spassky (photo: Icelandic Chess Federation)

Miles, Hübner, Robert Byrne, and Milan Vukić, ultimately tying for 6th-7th place. His performance at Bugojno solidified his position among the world's best.

A testament to his character, Hort was also renowned for his good humour. One morning during the 1978 Bugojno tournament, when we were playing tennis, I offered Hort to take him to a friend's place for some great food - "sarma" (a local dish with cabbage and meat). "Sure, let's go!" he said enthusiastically. But, there was a background to the story: We went to the house of my local acquaintance, Mirjana, who was keen to introduce her daughter Goca to the Czechoslovak grandmaster, hoping something might come out of it. Despite his fondness for the cooking, Hort politely sidestepped any romantic entanglements, famously stating, "You know what Dinja (my nickname), I love sarma; But to get married? Not, really keen". This light-hearted exchange became a running joke between Hort and his friends at subsequent events.

Vlastimil Hort's life was dedicated to chess, marked by successes and a jovial spirit and he will be remembered in chess history.

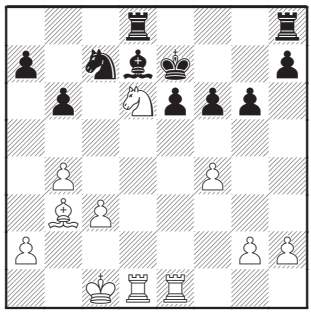
Thanks for all the great times, dear Vlastimil and for being not just a great player, but an extraordinary human being.

Vlastimil **Hort** - Lev **Polugaevsky**

USSR vs. Rest of the World Belgrade YUG (1.4), 29.03.1970

Playing for the "Rest of the World" team in the celebrated 1970 match against the USSR, Hort notably triumphed over Lev Polugaevsky on board four, securing a 2.5-1.5 victory in their mini-match (three draws and one victory).

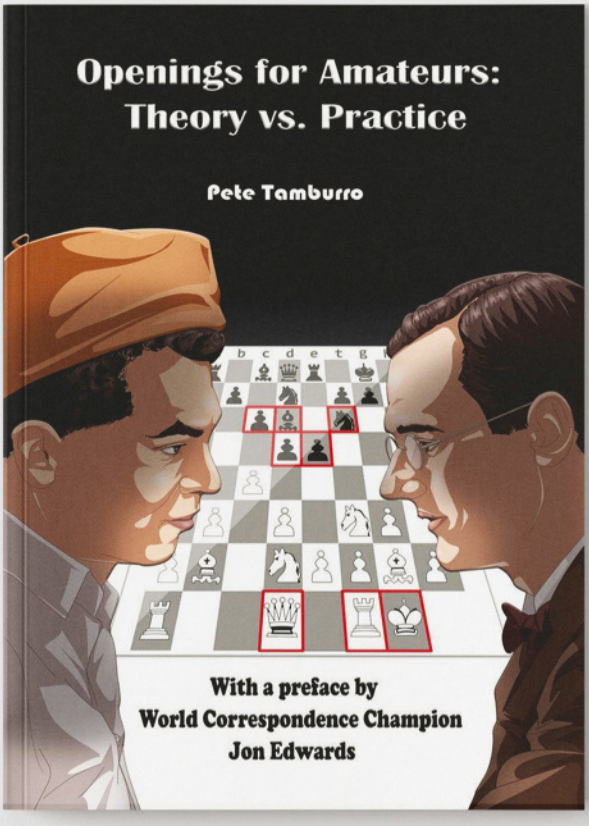
1.e4 c5 2.c3 ♘f6 3.e5 ♘d5 4.d4 cxd4 5.♕xd4 e6 6.♘f3 ♘c6 7.♕e4 d6 8.♘bd2 dxe5 9.♘xe5 ♘f6 10.♕a4 ♕d5 11.♘df3 ♗d6 12.♗f4 ♕e4+ 13.♕xe4 ♘xe4 14.♗d3 ♘xe5 15.♗xe5 ♗xe5 16.♘xe5 ♘c5 17.♗c2 f6 18.♘c4 ♔e7 19.0-0-0 ♗d7 20.b4 ♘a6 21.♘d6 b6 22.♖he1 g6 23.♗b3 ♖ad8 24.f4 ♘c7



25.f5! gxf5 26.♘xf5+ ♔f7 27.♖d3 ♗c8 28.♖g3 ♘e8 29.♘d4 ♘c7 30.♘f5 ♘e8 31.♘d4 ♘c7 32.♖e4 ♖dg8 33.♖xg8 ♖xg8 34.♘f5 ♖d8 35.♖g4 ♘e8 36.♖h4 h5 37.♖xh5 ♔g6 38.♘g3 ♘g7 39.♖h4 ♗b7 40.♖g4+ ♔f7 41.♘e2 f5 42.♖c4 ♘e8 43.♖d4 ♖d6 44.♘f4 ♗c8 45.♗a4 ♖xd4 46.♗xe8+ ♔xe8 47.cxd4 ♔e7 48.♔d2 ♔f6 49.♘d3 ♔g5 50.♔e3 ♗a6 51.♘f4 ♗c4 52.a3 a5 53.g3 ♔g4 54.♔f2 ♔g5 55.h4+ ♔f6 56.♔e3 axb4 57.axb4 e5 58.♘d3 exd4+ 59.♔xd4 b5 60.♘f4 ♗f1 61.♔d5 ♗c4+ 62.♔d6 ♗b3 63.♘d5+ ♔g6 64.♔e5 ♗c2 65.♘e7+ ♔h5 66.♘xf5

1-0

Forget memorising lines—Start mastering ideas!



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WINTON

BRITISH CHESS SOLVING CHAMPIONSHIP 2025-2026

The starter problem for this championship, again sponsored by **Winton**, is shown below. White, playing up the board, is to play and force mate in two moves against any black defence.

WBCSC STARTER 2025-2026

Black (8 Men)

White (9 Men)

There is no entry fee, and the competition is open to British residents only. Competitors need send only White's first move, known as the key-move. Postal entries should be sent to:

Nigel Dennis, Boundary House, 230 Greys Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon, RG9 1QY

Or email: <**winton@theproblemist.org**>

All entries should be postmarked or dated no later than **31st July 2025** and must give the entrant's name and home address. Juniors under the age of 18 on 31st August 2024 must give their date of birth. *Please mention that you saw the starter problem in BCM.*

Receipt of the solution to the starter will only be acknowledged after the closing date, when all competitors will receive the answer, and those who get it right will also receive the postal round, which will contain 8 more difficult and varied problems. In due course the best competitors and the best juniors from the postal round will be invited to the final at Harrow School on 21st February 2026. The ultimate winner of the final will win the right to represent Great Britain at the World Chess Solving Championships later in 2026.

Endgame Studies

by Ian Watson
ian@irwatson.uk

1

P. Michelet
Original composition 2025
WIN

2

P. Michelet
Original composition 2025
WIN

3

P. Michelet
Original composition 2025
WIN

4

P. Michelet
Original composition 2025
DRAW

MICHELET MAGIC!

Four new studies by Paul Michelet, one of our regular contributors and one of the leading modern composers. These studies show the breadth of his interests, and the delightful ideas he incorporates in his creations.

We can call the theme of the first study 'Which Pawn?' (for obvious reasons). Paul's position derives from one composed by John Beasley; John's had pawns already on the sixth rank, but Paul has found a setting where they start on their original squares. It's not a hard solve, but when you've cracked it, consider how many fine features Paul has packed into a simple pawn ending.

From delicacy to brutality - the second study is a slugfest followed by a queen hunt. It includes a short 'staircase', one of Paul's favourite themes.

The third study is a clever development of the 'Reti theme' - Reti's 1921 pawn study that is one of the most famous of all studies.

To finish, Paul presents you with a seriously tough solving challenge. My computer struggles with this one, although once you see the central ideas it becomes humanly solvable - but I couldn't. Paul's mysterious move four did for me. How did he come up with that? He hasn't told me... magicians don't reveal their secrets.

The solutions are on page 383.

SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS (See page 371)

This month's originals

A series of solver-friendly (but not easy) challenges this month! Remember that in the helpmates Black plays first, initiating a collaborative sequence of moves leading to his being mated (thus in Abdelaziz's problem two bwbw# sequences).

The three-mover challenge

In Leonid's problem, I think that the eye is drawn to the possibility of arranging to play ♕xd7#. But none of the ways of guarding d7 with White's bishop or knight look promising. However, the experienced solver may persevere and find that 1.♘e5! is indeed the key. This threatens 2.♕xd7, and, although Black will have 2…♔xe5, 3.♕e7 will then be mate. Black has three defences, the first two of which are met by pleasing second move quiet continuations. After 1…♖g6, White plays 2.♘c6!, and the threat of 3.♕b8# is unanswerable because Black can no longer play 2…♖b1. After 1…♘xe3 White has 2.♘fd3, threatening 3.♕xd7#, and again Black is stymied as he has forgone the possibility of playing 2…♘xe5 (or 2…♘b6). Finally, 1…Sxe5 fails against a forcing (but eye-catching) sequence: 2.♕f8+ ♔c7 3.d6#.

The seven-mover challenge

Paul's solution starts surprisingly. In itself, the centralizing move 1.♘e4 (with the threat of 2.♘g5+) doesn't raise any eyebrows, but the idea is that after 1…♔xe5 (much the best; not 1…f3 2.♗g5 ♔f7 3.♖d8…) the e4 knight will be jettisoned: 2.♗b2+!. Play proceeds 2…♔xe4 3.♗g7 (threat 3.♖d4) e5 and now 4.♗h6 puts Black in zugzwang. If he plays 4…f3 5.♗c1! (a further zugzwang) g5 6.♖d2 (yet again zugzwang) ♔f4 7.♖d4#. Or if 4…g5, then a different approach, featuring further zugzwangs: 5.♗f8! f3 6.♗d6! ♔f4 7.♖d4#.

'Rex solus'...

is problemist-speak for a problem with a bare king. The creative challenge for the composer of such a problem is to introduce interesting strategic complexities in the absence of black officers. I think that Abdelaziz achieves this in exemplary fashion, with two nicely complementary lines of play in both of which all the white officers play a full part - 1.♔d4 ♖f2 2.♔c3 ♘ed3# and 1.♔f5 ♗h6 2.♔f6 ♘fg6#.

The Ugren challenge

Regular readers will know to expect to have to cudgel their brains to work out how to get to a mate position in a long helpmate by Ljubomir. Although there are two white knights the white king has to play an active part also, and the unique mating sequence runs as follows: 1.♖c7 ♘c3 2.♕e6 ♔b1 3.♔f8 ♔xc2 4.♔e7 ♔d3 5.♔d6 ♔d4 6.♖e7 ♘b5#. Congratulations if you found this!

SOLUTIONS TO ENDGAMES

(See page 380)

Michelet - pawns only

1.g4 c4 2.g5 b4 3.g6 b3 4.c3 b2 5.g7 and now either **5...♔c2 6.g8♗** or **5...♔a1 6.g8♖** and White will check and then capture the new Black queen, winning the resultant pawn ending. (Not 6.g8♕? because when White checks, Black will play ...♔xc3, and then ♕xb1 will be stalemate.)

We asked, 'Which Pawn?', and the answer is the g- not the h-pawn, in view of 1.h4? c4 2.h5 b4 3.h6 b3 4.c3 b2 5.h7 ♔c2 draws, because White can't promote to a white-square bishop.

Two underpromotions. A natural and light position. Only pawns on the board. Plus, an 'Excelsior': a pawn advances from its starting square all the way to promotion. Even a 'try': a White move which nearly solves, failing only to a single Black defence. It's a thematic 'try' too, one whose refutation coheres with the solution, and it incorporates a second Excelsior. All that and the study only has seven men, so it's a miniature too. Truly an excellent composition.

Michelet - White QRB

1.♗xf4+ exf4 2.g7+ ♔xg7 3.♖xc5 ♗xc5 4.♕b2+ ♔g8 5.♕a2+ ♔g7 6.♕a1+ ♔g8 7.♕a8+ ♔g7 8.h6+ and wins—after grabbing the Black queen, it's not hard to stop those Black pawns. 1.g7+? ♔xg7 and 1.gxh7+? ♔xh5. In the main line, 2.gxh7+? ♗f6. So, White has to sacrifice both the rook and the bishop. The White queen works its way to a8, using a short 'staircase' on b2, a2, and a1. Paul has composed studies with much longer staircases, and with multiple long staircases too.

Michelet - White N

1.c5 ♔b7 2.♘b8 ♔xb8 3.c6 ♔c8 4.♔f6 ♔d8 5.c7+ and wins, because White can capture the h-pawn, play his king to b6 and so force the e-pawn to move, come back to capture it and then play to e8.

1.♘c5? ♔b6 and Black will mop up the White pawns.

4.♔f6 threatens to go to e7 to force the d-pawn through, while also staying in range of the h-pawn. Reti-like.

TMichelet - White R

1.♖a3 ♗b2 2.♖xa6 g3 3.♖a8+ with two variations:

3...♔f7 4.♖d8 g2 5.♖xd7+ ♔g6 6.♖d8 ♔h7 7.♖g8 ♔xg8 8.d7 and will draw by perpetual check.

3...♔g7 4.♖a4 ♔h6 5.♖a8 ♗c1 6.♖h8+ ♔g5 7.♖d8 ♗e3 8.♔a5 ♔h6 9.♖h8+ ♔g5 10.♖d8 draws.

White alternates between threatening to push the d-pawn, stopping the g-pawn, and checking the Black king.

At the start, White makes sure he wins one of the two Black bishops; if he doesn't, Black is simply winning on material. 1.♖b1? ♗b2 2.♖g1 ♗e2 3.♔c5 ♔g7 wins.

In the main line, second variation: 4... g2 5.♔a5 g1♕ 6.♖g4+ ♕xg4 stalemate; 8.♖xd7? ♔h6 9.♖e7 g2 10.d7 g1♕.

Congratulations if you successfully solved this study! That move 4.♖a4 is a doozie!

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